

Afghanistan's minority Shiites, known as Hazaras. Ittehad-e-Islami is comprised of Pushtu-speaking Sunni Muslim, who dominated Afghanistan for nearly three centuries but fear their hold on power is being chipped away by

Algerian party chief says youth going underground

Margoa Haoved. Sometimes families of eight share a small hotel room, sleeping on wall-to-wall beds with a small adjoining bathroom, no refrigerator and no stove.

Arieh Bar, director-general of the housing ministry, told Israel television that the problem is finding Ethiopians housing in areas where they can get proper assistance.

Coming from a rural to an industrial society, they need job training. Few Israelis speak their language, Amharic.

Mr. Elazar blames the bureaucracy for letting them "fall between the cracks."

The adults miss their injera bread, a thin pancake eaten with a spicy stew. They barely tolerate the bland food served in the communal dining rooms.

Only 20 families from Margoa Haoved have moved to apartments in the past year.

"I will be happy if I have a home," said Yaffi Malara, 31, her two-year-old son Bagali in her arms.

ALGIERS (R) — The situation in Algeria is so bad young people are seeking ways of going underground to join armed groups fighting security forces, opposition leader Hocine Ait Ahmad says.

"The situation has worsened ... confronted by massive and arbitrary repression, young people are looking for ways to join the underground," he told the daily *La Nation*.

"We are terrified by the prospect of seeing our society destabilised," said Mr. Ait Ahmad, leader of the Socialist Forces Front (SFF) and a hero of the Algerian independence war.

It is because we are on the eve of the anniversary of national

League: Gaza a big jail

CAIRO (R)—The Arab League has condemned Israel for closing the occupied Gaza Strip and said the Jewish state had turned it into "a huge prison."

"Israeli occupation authorities have closed the Gaza Strip entirely and cut it off from the rest of the world, turning it into a huge prison," the 21-member league said in a statement.

Israel indefinitely barred Gaza's 750,000 Palestinians from entering the Jewish state 10 days ago.

The United Nations has begun distributing food aid to Gazans who are cut off from their jobs.

The league's statement called Israeli actions against Palestinians under occupation "inhuman" and urged a concerted international effort to protect them.

"It (the league) stresses that the international community should take into its own hands the protection of the civilian population in the occupied Arab lands by sending international forces to protect them," the Cairo-based League added.

He urged the army-backed ruling council, which took power when the National Liberation Front (FLN) government collapsed, to make a historic declaration of independence day in

depositions, saying the guards were interrogated in questionable circumstances and cannot be cross-examined.

Shaked also said he has proved that Demjanjuk also served as a guard at the Sobibor and Flossenbürg camps — which would make him guilty of war crimes under Israeli law.

"It would have been much better had this case never been tried," wrote Ran Kislav in the daily Haaretz newspaper. "Whoever thought to turn it into the new Eichmann trial made a grave mistake."

Demjanjuk is the second person to be tried in Israel on Nazi war crimes. The first was Adolf Eichmann, who was convicted and hanged in 1962.

Nazi hunter Efraim Zuroff said that while the trial had helped teach younger Israelis about the holocaust, an acquittal would probably make it much harder to prosecute alleged Nazis.

Mohammad Boudiaf, named head of state by the council, has called for a national rally of political parties to lead the country out of the crisis which arose when Islamic fundamentalists were set to win a parliament majority.

A nation-wide manhunt is on to catch dozens of armed Muslim militants still at large in various parts of the country where more than 50 members of the security forces have been slain.

In the latest incident, state television reported on Wednesday night that one soldier and a Muslim militant were slain, and four other persons including a soldier wounded near the western

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel, which put 10 "green commandments" to the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro on Wednesday, is committing its own sins against nature, a leading environmental activist said.

Israel overpumps groundwater, overuses pesticides, dumps untreated sewage into streams and controls toxic vehicle and industrial emissions inadequately, said Josef Tamir, chairman of Life and Environment, the umbrella group for Israeli environmental organisations.

"The government officials have no feelings or sentiments for the environment," Mr. Tamir, 75,

TUNIS (R)—President Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali said on Friday Tunisia would further free political and economic life but would not ease its opposition to Muslim fundamentalists he said were a danger to democracy and human rights.

"The democratic experience we have acquired up to now in less than five years... makes us confident in going further in this irreversible process," Mr. Ben Ali said in a speech with Routers.

But he ruled out allowing fundamentalist movements to enjoy the political liberalisation which has already seen six opposition parties legalised.

"The fundamentalists' threat is genuine, and constitutes a danger for the values of democracy and human rights," he said.

The Nahdha fundamentalist movement was banned and most of its leaders were arrested last year after the government said it had uncovered a fundamentalist plot to take power by violence.

"We are determined to stop this subversive movement, all the

by using demagogues, practising terrorism and violence, by conspiring against the democratic institutions, by rejecting the democratic means — this movement's followers have not only excluded themselves from the national consensus ... they also betrayed the message of Islam ... they pretend to defend," Mr. Ben Ali said.

Mr. Ben Ali said the "development of fanatic movements in the world, risks driving us back 50 years and even centuries ..."

Tunisia's neighbour Algeria suffered this year banned its fundamentalist party, the Islamic Front, which opposed democracy but came close to winning power in parliament.

Mr. Ben Ali pledged that liberalisation of the economy would be pursued.

The chief of the armed group was identified as Aissani Yahia, 24, a member of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) which was set to win parliamentary elections in Algeria and was later banned.

proclaimed by the U.N. last September but the referendum, originally scheduled for January, has been stalled by a dispute over who is eligible to vote.

U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali gave the belligerents until the end of May to reach an agreement on the issue but when they failed to do so he extended the deadline to the end of August.

In his latest report to the Security Council, Dr. Ghali indicated that if there was no agreement on the electoral roll question the U.N. would have to seek another solution.

The Defence Ministry would neither confirm nor deny a report in the weekly observateur published on Wednesday saying nine paratroopers had deserted with their weapons to probably join the Muslim underground.

Iraq

The report noted that access inside Iraq is almost non-existent. "It is a new level of magnitude and continuing nature of the human rights abuses in Iraq, Middle East War-battered region," it stated. "What belies that the stationing of U.N. troops in Iraq is not sufficient, is that Iraq is an essential, although not sufficient, step for safeguarding the rights of civilians." It said.

It endorsed the recommendation of the U.N. special rapporteur on Iraq, Ambassador Max van der Stoep of the Netherlands, to send a team of monitors with guaranteed access to all parts of the country.

And it called for an immediate solution to the impasse on a special oil sale to buy food and medicine for Iraqis suffering from the U.N. embargo that followed Iraq's August 1990 invasion of

Kuwait. The Baghdad government has rejected the Security Council's offer allowing it to sell \$1.6 billion worth of oil in the one-time sale. Iraq says that the amount is not enough and that conditions imposed to monitor the sale and for U.N. distribution of the food supplies would infringe on its sovereignty.

The human rights group said Iraq should also end an embargo of food and fuel to the part of northern Iraq that is held by Kurdish rebels.

Middle East Watch said that atrocities were also committed by the rebel forces against Baath Party officials, their families and Iraqi soldiers.

It noted the summary execution of 60 soldiers by Kurdish Peshmarga guerrillas who were shot in the head in Sulaimaniyeh in October.


Intrusion by salt water is the major problem but other contaminants have also seeped into the aquifer, posing a long-term threat.

Israel, with a reputation for advanced agriculture, uses pesticides in larger quantities than other developed countries, Mr. Tamir said. In some cases, birds have died from eating heavily sprayed fruit.

Drivers use almost exclusively leaded petrol, a major health hazard. Unleaded fuel is hard to find.

And the sewage infrastructure has not kept pace with housing development. Untreated sewage is dumped not only by villages, but also by cities.

In the port of Eilat, Israel's resort on the Red Sea, sewage is sometimes dumped into the water, threatening the coral that has made the region a divers' paradise.



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Palestinian pilgrims thank King, government

MECCA (Petra) — Palestinian pilgrims, now performing this year's pilgrimage to Mecca, Saturday voiced appreciation and gratitude to His Majesty King Hussein for his initiative and generous contribution to restore Al Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock.

In a cable they sent to King Hussein, after a meeting with Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Sheikh Izzuddin Al Khatib Al Tamimi, the head of the Palestinian pilgrims team, Hussein Abu Allo, congratulated the King on Eid Al Adha and voiced hope that Arabs and Muslims will unite their fold. He thanked the King for his directives to the government to provide the necessary facilities and services to enable them to perform the Haj smoothly.

They also thanked the Jordanian government for the facilities it provided to them and praised the minister's efforts to facilitate the smooth performance of the pilgrimage. Hussein Abu Allo thanked the Jordanian pilgrims and medical teams for the good services they have rendered to pilgrims from occupied Palestine.



His Majesty King Hussein, accompanied by Health Minister Aref Al Bataineh, Saturday inaugurates a newly-constructed hospital in Tafleeh (Petra photo)

King inaugurates hospital

TAFILEH (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Saturday inaugurated the newly-constructed Prince Zeid Ibn Al Hussein Hospital building in the city of Tafleeh in the southern part of the Kingdom.

The three-floor hospital, which has a capacity of 100 beds expandable to 200, is expected to house an emergency ward, outpatient clinics, modern laboratories, a physiotherapy unit as well as the more traditional surgery, internal medicine, pediatrics and gynaecology and delivery sections.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by Their Royal Highnesses Prince Abdullah Ibn Al Hussein and Prince Ali Ibn Al Hussein, Royal Court Chief Khalid Al Karaki, Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'ad Ben Zeid, director of the Royal Medical Services and director of the hospitals Department at the Ministry of Health, Mustafa Barmawi who said in a statement to Petra that the new hospital includes a section for electro-technical services, a nursing house, another housing unit for hospital staff and a landing area for helicopters.

The idea to construct a modern hospital in place of a smaller and less efficient one in Tafleeh was conceived over a decade ago after the departed Queen Alia Al Hussein lost her life while attempting to reach it in response to complaints about the quality of its services.

The hospital will be under the management of the Royal Medical Services.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by Their Royal Highnesses Prince Abdullah Ibn Al Hussein and Prince Ali Ibn Al Hussein, Royal Court Chief Khalid Al Karaki, Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'ad Ben Zeid, director of the Royal Medical Services and director of the hospitals Department at the Ministry of Health, Mustafa Barmawi who said in a statement to Petra that the new hospital includes a section for electro-technical services, a nursing house, another housing unit for hospital staff and a landing area for helicopters.

The JD 3 million hospital, constructed over an area of nine dunums, also has additional facilities for treating heart patients and an intensive care unit.

The King, who went on a tour of the building, gave his instructions for stepping up efforts to install all the necessary facilities and equipment and employ the needed medical staff so that the hospital would begin rendering services to Tafleeh citizens.



UAE RESUMES FLIGHTS — The United Arab Emirates airline Friday resumed its flights to Amman which were stopped as a result of the Gulf war. The first UAE plane arrived at Queen Alia International Airport with 119 passengers aboard. The plane was received by senior Royal Jordanian officials. UAE will operate two flights to Amman on Fridays and Saturdays.

Jordan Times
Tel.: 667171

Labour minister calls for more ILO participation in unemployment problems

GENEVA (Petra) — Labour Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabariti Saturday called on the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to play a bigger role in assisting Jordan to counter problems of poverty and unemployment.

Addressing the 79th session of the ILO conference, Mr. Kabariti said Jordan lies in the centre of an area suffering from dangers and challenges, yet it opted to counter such challenges with further democracy, freedom and respect for human rights. He noted that the National Charter of Jordan, which was endorsed by the nation late last year, enhanced the democratic march and served as a basis for the Jordanian approach to achieve a comprehensive development with social dimensions and human face.

Mr. Kabariti stressed that there would be no permanent peace or successful democracy without social security and political stability. He voiced hope that the ILO, along with the international community and international agencies, will stand up to address the issues of poverty and unemployment and help to alleviate their effects.

"We hope to see initiatives going beyond the symposia and recommendations" to touch the situation on the ground, said the minister. He called on the ILO to support and encourage social reforms as a prerequisite for safeguarding the democratic march, noting that democracy and social justice are inseparable.

Mr. Kabariti thanked Japan, the European Community and the United States for their contributions to Jordan to help it recover from the economic and social suffering.

He warned of the persistence of social and economic sufferings, saying that such sufferings provides the right atmosphere for the powers of fanaticism and extremism to prosper and to become stronger, thus destroying the powers of moderation and tolerance.

He voiced hope that the ILO, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank would forge closer cooperation to ensure the objective balance between the reform programmes.

"Such a balance is necessary to ensure harmony between the economic, political and social dimensions and to prevent them from becoming an obstacle to democracy and to the shift to the market economy," Mr. Kabariti said.

The minister said that Jordan has selected the democratic approach in which political pluralism, the mainstay of democracy, has thrived and enhanced.

He referred to the new Labour Law which was presented to the government for debate and approval. Commenting on the law, Mr. Kabariti said it gives independence to the labour unions and provides for social security to the personnel of such unions.

He noted that the initiatives for combating poverty and unemployment and improving conditions of work have been further enhanced through the establishment of funds such as the Development and Employment Fund, the National Aid Fund, the establishment of cooperative organisations and societies' updating of legislations and setting up of projects.

Mr. Kabariti, who heads the Jordanian delegation to the ILO meetings, said his delegation hopes that the ILO will take the lead to study the issues of Jordanian labourers returning home as a result of the Gulf crisis and to deal with them in accordance with the international laws and charters.

"I am sure you realise the gravity and scale of the sufferings of the returnees and the tireless efforts my country is making to cope with this huge number of returnees and to render services to them," Mr. Kabariti said. He noted that the large number of people who returned to Jordan as a result of the Gulf crisis jeopardises the infrastructure of the country and consequently its balanced development.

Despite the high unemployment rates in Jordan, it provides more than 200,000 job opportunities to non-Jordanian workers from neighbouring Arab countries.

Concluding his speech, Mr. Kabariti called on the ILO to find the necessary mechanism to ensure that all states adhere to the agreements and resolutions issued by the United Nations and the International Labour conferences. He said: "We are looking forward to a new world in which just peace, prosperity and development can thrive. This cannot be achieved as long as there is a gap between the concept of international justice and international legitimacy. So, until this gap is narrowed and bridged, the international legitimacy will remain contestable," Mr. Kabariti said.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Prince conveys condolences

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad, the personal representative of His Majesty King Hussein, Saturday delegated the director of his office to offer condolences to Al Qataneh family over the death of the wife of Haj Mifteh Salem Al Qataneh.

Minister receives ambassador

AMMAN (Petra) — Information Minister Mahmoud Al Sharif received in his office Saturday Tunisian Ambassador to Jordan Mohammad Al Manji Al Habib on the occasion of the end of his tour of duty in the Kingdom.

Education minister receives French official

AMMAN (Petra) — Deputy Prime Minister and Education Minister Thouqan Al Hindawi received Saturday deputy chairman of the Cultural and Family Affairs Committee of the French National Assembly, Jean-Paul Fuchs. The meeting discussed ways of enhancing Franco-Jordanian relations in educational fields.

French delegation visits library

AMMAN (Petra) — A French delegation specialised in documentation and restoration of documents and manuscripts visited Saturday the University of Jordan library where it met with its director, Farouq Mansour. Mr. Mansour briefed the delegation on the library's various sections and its role in serving the local society. The delegation also visited the university's Documentation and Manuscripts Centre.

Ministry to open 9 summer clubs

NORTHERN JORDAN VALLEY (Petra) — The Ministry of Education has decided to open nine summer clubs in the Northern Jordan Valley District, of which four will be for male students. Director of the Education Department in the district, Suleiman Tawaha, said that a total of 961 students will enroll in these summer camps which will be open for students as of July 4 and will close July 29. He said the activities of these centres will include reading, religious and vocational education, flower arrangement and dress-making. Mr. Tawaha added that 88 teachers were appointed for these clubs.

Electricity, energy ministers to meet

CAIRO (Petra) — Ministers of electricity and energy in Jordan, Egypt, Syria and Turkey will hold a meeting in Damascus in the beginning of October to discuss issues related to connecting national electric grids between Arab countries. Egyptian Electricity Minister Maher Abatha said that the meeting will discuss connecting the Arab grid with the European unified grid via Turkey in the East and via Italy in the West. The Damascus meeting will be attended by head of the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development Abdul Latif Al Hamad and director of the Islamic Bank Ahmad Ali. Both of them will discuss the prospect of extending the needed finances for the project.

West Bank students to take Tawjihi

AMMAN (Petra) — The General Examinations Committee Saturday reiterated an earlier resolution allowing Tawjihi students in the occupied West Bank to take the Tawjihi examination in the second semester's subjects only and to average their grades according to their results in both the first and second semester examinations or to take the examination in the subjects of both semesters and to have their grades averaged according to their performance in the final examination. The committee, meeting under its chairman, Thouqan Al Hindawi, allowed students who were not able to take the first semester examination due to emergency circumstances and to sit for the Tawjihi examinations in subjects of both the first and second semesters.

Al Koura District to hold celebration

DEIR ABEE SAEED (Petra) — Al Koura District will Sunday mark Jordan's Independence Day and the Great Arab Revolt anniversaries. A major celebration will be held in the district with the participation of the Jordanian Armed Forces and public and official institutions. District Governor Aref Abu Karaki said several projects, which have cost JD 4 million, will be inaugurated on the occasion. He said as part of the celebration Deputy Prime Minister and Education Minister Thouqan Al Hindawi will lay the foundation stone for two secondary schools in the district. He added that Health Minister Aref Bataineh will also lay the foundation stone for Deir Abee Saeed Hospital.

Arab information to be discussed

CAIRO (Petra) — Arab information ministers will gather in Cairo June 12 for a discussion on issues related to Arab information for Space and Satellites. The ministerial meeting will be preceded by a meeting of the permanent Arab Information Committee. The committee will discuss a report on its conception of the Arab information systems in the coming stage.

2nd phase of traffic campaign begins

DEIR ABEE SAEED (Petra) — The second phase of a campaign launched by the Highway Patrol Department to spread awareness among the public on traffic rules started Saturday in Irbid and Mafrqa governorates. Pamphlets were distributed in Deir Abee Saeed town by the department's personnel. The first phase of the campaign included Amman, Zarqa and Balqa governorates. The third phase, which will include South Jordan, will start June 20.

Traffic accident figures released

AMMAN (Petra) — Six people were killed and 158 others injured as a result of 328 car accidents which took place in the last week of May, according to Traffic Department source. The sources said that the number of accidents in this week dropped by one compared to the week before and the number of casualties also dropped by one.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition of paintings by five Malaysian artists at the National Gallery of Fine Arts, Jabal Luweibdeh.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Ali Taleb and Rafi Nasiri at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation Gallery (10 a.m. - 5 p.m.).
- ★ Plastic art exhibition by 40 Jordanian artists entitled "An Artist and a Painting" at Balaadna Art Gallery, Gardens Street.
- ★ Exhibition of handicrafts, gifts, leather products, scents, food and sweets at the Amman Plaza Hotel.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Issam Tantawi at the Phoenix Gallery for Experimental Arts.

LECTURE

- ★ Lecture, in Arabic, on Al Ma'azil Islamic Group by Sheikh Amin Diah at the Scientific and Cultural Centre of Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation — 6 p.m.

FILM

- ★ Feature film entitled "Rear Window" at the American Centre — 7 p.m.

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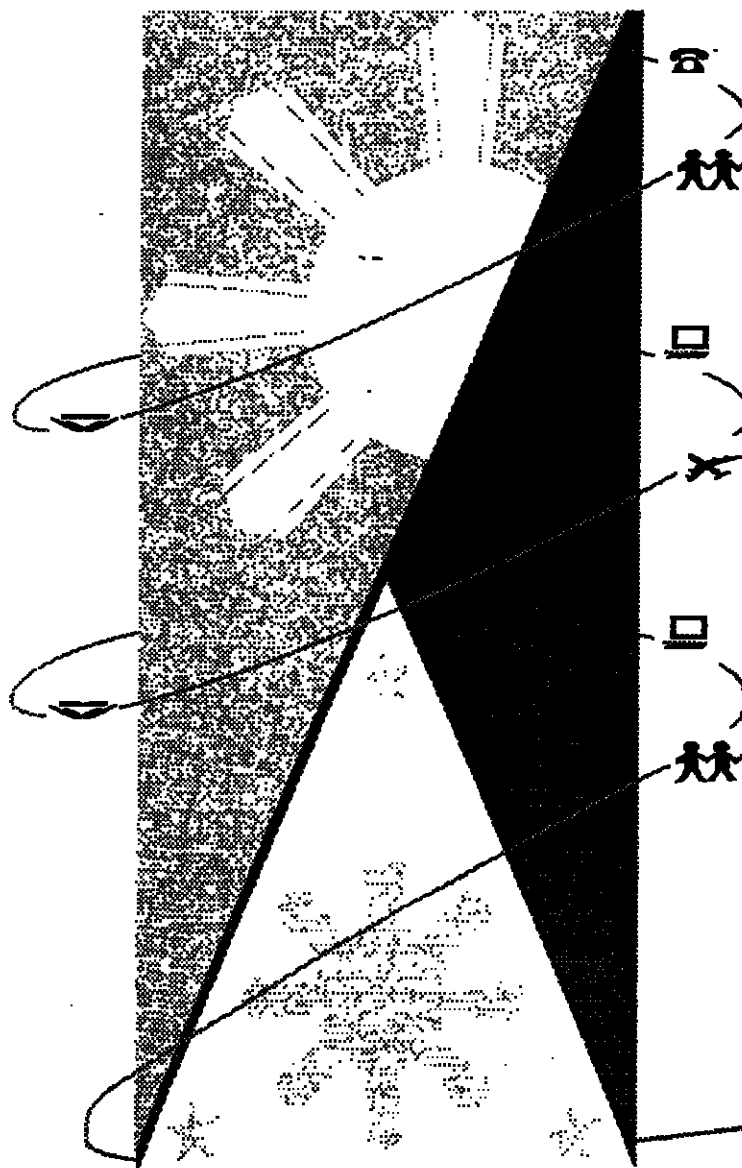
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Setting the tone

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein's speech to the graduating class of Mu'ta University Saturday was also an address to the nation that tackled real challenges which need additional reflection and closer scrutiny. The greatest challenge that found expression in the King's words was the call for the opening of hab al ijtihad in all pursuits and endeavours so that democracy in Jordan would acquire an added meaning and significance, wider scope and dimensions, and the era of enlightenment may dawn upon us. In retrospect, of all the shortcomings of the Arab and Islamic worlds, the continued inaccessibility to opportunities for wider and deeper interpretation of the ethos and standard of values of the Arab and Islamic peoples has been the single most pressing issue that awaited being recognised and tackled. "We insist on additional democracy and dialogue in our universities," the King told his student audience; he probably also meant deeper and more thorough dialogue among all the people of Jordan and the springing up of even deeper roots for the country's democracy. Nothing short of a new Jordan, based on fresh and enlightened bases, is the calling of the Monarch to his people. And as schools and universities are the very institutions that have the capacity and potential to form a new Jordanian mentality and perspective, there was no better place to put the challenges for greater and deeper intellectual and moral change in the Kingdom than at an institution of higher learning.

With his words, the King has set the tone for the challenges of the new era that, hopefully, the country will continue to usher in with perseverance and determination. It is now the duty of the people to pick up where the King has left off by translating this perception of a new horizon into deeds. There is no better way to attain this objective than to institutionalise the machinery for turning these new aspirations and goals into de facto achievements. It is one thing to wish for deeper and more profound democratisation in the country and quite another to prescribe the modalities for attaining such a cherished goal. And this is where the greatest challenge lies. Both the executive and legislative branches of government must therefore rise up to the new challenges by drawing the blueprint for their attainment and implementation. This calls for action based on thorough preparedness and forethought. This is not to belittle the role of the judiciary, which has the primary role to reinterpret the country's laws in the most enlightened manner that is commensurate with the needs and aspirations of the new Jordan that the King was talking about. Again, there is no better start for this reinterpretation process than to look afresh at the various international treaties that the Kingdom had ratified but continues to ignore. To put the ideas of His Majesty into deeds requires fresh and enlightened minds beginning with the executive branch and ending with the judiciary. Otherwise, the King's words will remain pious utterances that may never see the light of day.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily dwelt Saturday on the Middle East situation noting that after one quarter of a century of occupation, Israel is still escalating its aggression, in different forms, against the Arabs while the Arab Nation continues to busy itself with differences and divisions. The paper said that the Arabs should put aside their differences and should take steps towards solidarity in the face of the common threat and continued Israeli occupation. Jordan has been calling for such solidarity and it is now hosting a meeting of the four foreign ministers of the countries directly in confrontation with Israel to arrive at a formula to deal with the situation in the region, the paper said. It should be stressed in this respect that without an Arab force and without coordination among the Arab states, at all levels, nothing positive can be achieved, the paper said. It must be emphasised again that a United Arab front and collective action on the part of the four Arab countries provide guarantees for a successful joint endeavour in the course of achieving Arab objectives, the paper added. The elapse of 25 years of occupation should prompt the Arab countries to take stock of the past events and re-examine their positions with a view to addressing the unfavourable situation and to help give impetus to further efforts in the right direction, the paper demanded. It said that the Arabs should mark the occasion with additional determination to work together and deal firmly with issues of common concern.

AT THE Arab countries taking part in the Middle East peace process have now realised that the Shamir government is determined to abort any formula for a just peace with the Arabs, they are in a better position to determine whether they should go ahead with plans to meet with the Israelis under the prevailing conditions, said Sawt Al Shaab Arabic daily Saturday. There is no doubt that the foreign ministers meeting here Saturday will discuss Israel's growing atrocities against the Palestinians in the occupied Arab lands as well as Israel's continued aggression on Lebanon as a means to dissuade the Arabs from the negotiations, said the paper. It said that the ministers' meeting is of great significance as it comes just before the Israeli elections and at a time when the Arab states are facing an escalation of Israel's onslaught. The paper said that the ministers have a very sensitive task as Israel continues its repressive actions and its rejection of the U.N. Security Council resolutions and the international legitimacy. But these ministers now have an opportunity to crystallise their countries' joint stand vis-a-vis the peace process and with regard to the fast moving developments in the region, the paper said. The paper demanded that the four countries formally request a Security Council meeting to discuss Israel's current atrocities and its failure to comply with the requirements of international legitimacy.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

Bank credit is available to qualified borrowers

By Dr. Fahed Al Fanek

According to the new definition of banks' direct credit facilities to include banks' portfolios of shares in companies, the net increase in credit facilities extended to the private sector during the first quarter of 1992 amounted to JD171 million or 85 per cent of the projected growth for the whole year, or three times the amount envisaged by the economic adjustment programme for the first quarter of the year which is JD50 million only.

Yet Jordan was found to be still within the guidelines of the programme, and did not breach any of its conditions. The reason is that the amount of credit allotted to the treasury i.e., JD50 million, was not utilised. On the contrary, the treasury repaid some JD100 million of its old loans to the banks which reduced the overall banks' direct credit facilities to become within the allowed limitations.

The success of the Ministry of Finance in achieving a financial surplus in its dealing with the local banking system during the first quarter of this year helped in saving the situation, and removing the discrepancy. However, there is no guarantee that the

government will achieve another surplus in the remainder of the year, which renders it imperative to enforce the restrictions imposed by the Central Bank of Jordan as reflected in the strict orders issued to the banks and financial corporations.

The credit facilities extended by the banks to the public sector entities, as distinct from the treasury proper, rose during the first quarter of this year by JD51.1 million; but this rise occurred simultaneously with a reduction of approximately the same amount in the outstanding credit utilised by the specialised credit institution. The credit facilities used by the financial corporations remained constant. Thus, the overall picture of banks' credit facilities in the first quarter of 1992 remained within the framework of the economic adjustment programme.

The economic adjustment programme included projections for the private sector's quota of banks credit on quarterly basis, but these projections were presented as desired targets not as conditions. The conditions were confined to the ceiling of credit to be extended to the government and public sector on the one

hand, and to the ceiling of the overall net domestic assets of the commercial banking system, including the Housing Bank, on the other hand. In other words, the continued prudent policy of the treasury, and its doing without reverting to banks credit, or its repayment of part of the previous outstanding debt to banks would allow the private sector to obtain more credit facilities without breaching any condition or committing any discrepancy in the implementation of the programme.

As things stand now, the ceilings imposed on bank credit facilities, which were imposed by the central bank of Jordan in compliance with the programme, will not jeopardise the legitimate needs of the private sector to credit. Perhaps it will not be utilised in full. The real problem is that certain banks overextended themselves beyond their capacity, which prompted the central bank to act, warn those banks, and require them to correct their situation according to an agreed time table.

Under the current strict restrictions of the central bank, credit will continue to be reasonably available to qualified borrowers and investors.

U.S. does not view Islam as confronting the West or threatening world peace, official says

Djerejian: Shared fundamental values — and not religion — ultimately determine the quality of international relationship

Collective engagement is replacing cold war competition, with "profound effect in the Middle East," says Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Edward Djerejian. Acknowledging that the role of religion has become more important in the Middle East, Mr. Djerejian stressed that the United States "does not view Islam as the next 'ism' confronting the West or threatening world peace." Shared fundamental values — and not religion — ultimately determine the quality of international relationships, he said. Meanwhile, basic U.S. foreign policy goals in the region remain the same. Mr. Djerejian added in an address to the Meridian International Centre in Washington on June 2.

Following is the text of Mr. Djerejian's speech as prepared for delivery:

For over four decades the central characteristic of international relations was the dichotomy between the Soviet empire of dictatorial regimes and centrally planned economies, and the free world of democratic governments and market economies. Thus, the cold war reverberated around the globe, affecting virtually everyone, everywhere. Much of America's foreign policy, and that of many other free nations, was either driven by, or a derivative of, our collective efforts to contain Soviet aggression and expansion.

Today, East/West competition and conflict over the future of Europe and the Third World has been transformed. In the former Soviet Union, new leaders are striving for peaceful, democratic change as the only effective road to sustainable economic and social progress, partnership has replaced conflict. A new mode of international cooperation, which Secretary of State James Baker has called "collective engagement," is replacing the acrimonious competition of the cold war.

This sea change in world politics has had a profound effect in the Near East:

— An early example of the new "collective engagement" was the response to Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait. An historically unprecedented coalition responded forcefully and successfully in reversing that aggression and in preventing Iraq from threatening or coercing its neighbours.

In partnership with Russia, we have been able to bring Israel and all her immediate Arab neighbours — Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestinians — together, for the first time ever in an historic peace process, to negotiate a comprehensive settlement of their long-standing disputes in direct, face-to-face negotiations based on U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 and 338.

— Further, the United Nations has taken an increasingly active and positive role in enforcing the principles of its charter. Just this weekend, we have seen the U.N. Security Council enact Chapter Seven sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro following — in Secretary Baker's words — the "humanitarian nightmare" in Bosnia-Herzegovina, where many people, including Muslims, have been brutally victimised by the continued warfare. And besides its many resolutions on Iraq, the Security Council has shown it will not tolerate Libya's use of terrorism. In the Near East and Maghreb, the United Nations' activities extend from the Iraq and the Iraq/Kuwait border to the Western Sahara.

— And within the ancient lands of the Near East, the rapid and the fundamental change evident elsewhere is also pressing people to see their own futures in a new light, and to reevaluate their relationships with other nations, with their neighbours and with each other in a particularly challenging manner.

U.S. goals in the Near East

Amidst these changes, basic United States foreign policy

objectives remain consistent and clear. Two major goals stand out: First, we seek a just, lasting and comprehensive peace between Israel and all her neighbours, including the Palestinians; and second, we seek viable security arrangements which will assure stability and unimpeded commercial access to the vast oil reserves of the Arabian Peninsula and Gulf.

These are not new goals, of course. We have striven toward both for decades. What is new is the opportunity afforded us by recent global and regional events to make real progress toward achieving them.

Arab/Israeli peace process

The first of these goals — the search for peace between Arabs and Israelis — has challenged every U.S. administration in the last four decades. In the Middle East, where war has at times seemed endemic, the road to achieving lasting peace through negotiation now stretches before us. And the first historic steps forward have been taken.

We knew last autumn, before the first negotiations began in Madrid, that the path we had embarked on would not be an easy one.

Fundamental and bitterly contested differences separate the parties to the conflict. Nevertheless, there have now been five rounds of direct, bilateral talks between Israelis and Arabs, and a sixth round is being planned for a venue closer to the region — namely, Rome. In addition, we have worked closely with our Russian partners in this endeavor to launch the multilateral phase of the peace process. Let me comment briefly on where we stand in this process.

In the bilateral negotiations, the parties have resolved many procedural questions and have begun to put substantive issues on the table. Israel and the Arabs, including the Palestinians, are all engaging on the basic issues of land, peace and security which form the nexus of these negotiations.

Israel and the Palestinian are focusing directly on the central issue of interim self-government arrangements for the occupied territories as a first, transitional step along the path to a permanent settlement of their dispute, which will be resolved in final status negotiations.

— While major gaps remain between the respective positions of the parties, the bilateral talks between Israel and Syria, Lebanon and Jordan have begun down the path of serious negotiations aimed at defining possible areas of agreement and at narrowing differences, through compromise, where disagreement persists.

— This is the essence of the art of negotiation, and it is the essence of the negotiating process upon which the parties first embarked, seven months ago in Madrid.

Another major accomplishment has been the beginning of the multilateral phase of the peace process. As a result of closely coordinated planning by the United States and Russia, 36 countries, including 11 Arab states, gathered in Moscow in

January to organise working groups on issues of regional concern, such as Economic Development, the Environment, Refugees, Water Resources, and Arms Control and Regional Security. In mid-May, these working groups held their initial meetings in various capitals around the world. Follow-on meetings will convene later this year.

I just returned from Lisbon, where the multilateral steering committee met on May 27 to coordinate the work of these working groups. I can report that we had a successful and productive meeting. The reports from the five working groups demonstrated again that all parties are approaching the issues seriously and pragmatically, and we achieved agreement on the venues and timeframe for the next round of working group meetings to be held in the fall. These multilateral talks support, rather than substitute for, the bilateral negotiations, and we hope that those bilateral parties who have so far refrained from participating will join all these important talks as soon as possible.

"Two major (U.S.) goals stand out (in the Near East): First, we seek a just, lasting and comprehensive peace between Israel and all her neighbours, including the Palestinians; and second, we seek viable security arrangements which will assure stability and unimpeded commercial access to the vast oil reserves of the Arabian Peninsula and Gulf."

President Bush and Secretary Baker have committed the United States to play the role of an honest broker, a catalyst and a driving force to assure the continued progress of the peace process in all its dimensions. We look forward with real hope to the continued dedication and commitment to peace evinced thus far by the regional parties and the international community.

Gulf security and stability

A second major aspect of our Middle East policy is our shared interest in the security and stability of the Gulf. We all know that the countries of the Arabian Peninsula are located in a dangerous neighbourhood, and confront risks to their sovereignty and independence. Stability in the Gulf is vital, not only to our own national interest but also to the economic security of the whole world.

Arabian Peninsula

In February, I visited the countries which are members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). In all my conversations with their leaders and government officials, I stressed the need for individual self-defence, and for collective defence planning

and arrangements among the six GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman — with the goal of strengthening their ability to defend themselves against external aggression. I also encouraged security cooperation between the Gulf states and their friends in the region. Much work needs to be done in attaining this goal.

At the same time, I assured the GCC leaders that the United States will cooperate closely with them to meet their legitimate defence needs. This includes both the sales of weapons within the context of the president's Middle East Arms Control Initiative, and bilateral security arrangements such as the periodic conduct of joint military exercises, the maintenance of an enhanced naval presence in the Gulf, and arrangements for the access and prepositioning of critical military materiel and equipment. I emphasised that these bilateral efforts would complement, but not supersede, the Gulf states' collective security efforts. I reiterated that we do not intend to station ground troops permanently anywhere in the region. The purposes of both arms sales and collective security measures are to deter threats to our shared interests, and to raise the threshold of future requirements for direct U.S. military action.

Iraq

The most drastic threat to the security of the Gulf, and indeed of the whole region, has been Saddam Hussein's aggression against his neighbours and against the people of Iraq. Here, the collective engagement of the international community and our coalition partners has been noteworthy in carrying out UNSC resolutions. Saddam Hussein continues to refuse to comply fully with these resolutions, which were passed by the Security Council to ensure peace and security in the region.

Using "cheat and retreat" tactics, he has resisted dismantling his weapons of mass destruction, including ballistic missiles and the means to produce them, as mandated by Resolution 687. He refuses to end his repression of the Iraqi people or to respect their human rights as mandated by Resolution 688, and he is intentionally and systematically depriving large populations in the north and south of Iraq of the basic necessities of life for the sake of hanging on to his own personal power. Clearly, he

"Americans recognise Islam as one of the world's great faiths. The legacy of the Muslim culture which reached the Iberian Peninsula in the eighth century is a rich one in sciences, arts and culture, and in tolerance of Judaism and Christianity."

hopes to frustrate and outlast the will of the Security Council. We will enforce the U.N. sanctions fully. Saddam Hussein's regime has become more brittle and he is preoccupied by his quest for survival. Clearly, the Iraqi people deserve new leadership which will be representative of the pluralis-

tic nature of Iraqi society and ready to live at peace with Iraq's neighbours.

Iran

Across the Gulf from our friends and allies lies the Islamic Republic of Iran, an important country that can contribute to regional security if it chooses a constructive path. Iran knows what it has to do to be accepted by the international community. Many hope that the recent Majlis election will lead to moderate policies. We share this hope, but actions must be the litmus test.

From our view, the normalisation of relations with Iran depends on several factors, particularly an end to support for terrorism. Iran's role in the freeing of American hostages held in Lebanon was an important step. We hope this will lead to the release of all those being held outside the judicial process, regardless of nationality, and that this signals the permanent cessation of hostage-taking.

However, Iran's role in sponsoring terrorism continues in other ways that are deeply disturbing. Iran's human rights practices, and its apparent pursuit of a destabilising arms build-up, including everything from submarines to weapons of mass destruction, also remain matters of serious concern. Further, Iran's policies towards its neighbours in the Gulf, where we have vital interests, and in Central Asia need to be watched closely.

Another serious problem is Iran's categorical opposition to the Arab/Israeli peace process, and its support for those, like Hizbollah in Lebanon, who violently oppose it.

We have made clear from the

outset, that we are prepared to engage in a dialogue with authorised representatives of the Iranian government to discuss these issues and U.S./Iranian relations. To date, the Iranian leadership has declined to engage us in this dialogue.

Reviewing the main thrusts of our policy in the Middle East reminds us that, even in the 1990's, our national security interests in the region continue to exert a powerful claim on our attention. But there is more to our policy agenda than protection of vital resources and conflict resolution. Another pillar of U.S. policy is our support for human rights, pluralism, women's and minority rights and popular participation in government, and our rejection of extremism, oppression and terrorism. These worldwide issues constitute an essential part of the foundation for America's engagement with the countries of the Near East — from the Maghreb to Iran and beyond.

In this context, there are certain factors which we should underscore in discussing U.S. relations with these countries:

— The first is diversity. Not only is this area diverse within itself, so are our relations with the countries that make it up. This diversity requires not only that a clear sense of our own values and interests guide our policy, but also that understanding and tolerance be key factors in our dealings with other political cultures.

— The second point is interaction. U.S. relations with this part of the world are just the latest chapter in a history of interaction between the West and the Middle

(Continued on page 5)

LETTERS

'Undemocratic' criticism

To the Editor:

In her column entitled "Ruling and overruling," (Jordan Times, May 30, 1992) Randa Habib attacks a "bearded deputy" for wanting to use democracy as a means to reach power and implement Islamic Sharia. One should stop for a moment to ask: Doesn't democracy give everyone the right to express his or her own belief and seek to attain power through democratic means? The "bearded deputy" must have exercised that right when he said that "democracy was just a means to attain power." Besides, the deputy in question, whose lecture I had attended, had never said that Islamism, when they attain power, would punish those who did not believe in their faith. On the contrary, he repeatedly said that Islam welcomes and respects other points of view except atheism because of its failure.

Implementation of the Islamic law is surely the ultimate target of any loyal Muslim. However, this does not mean denial of the other parties' existence and their rights.

The very same "bearded deputy" had always maintained that Muslims welcome an open debate at the Roman Theatre or anywhere else to give everyone the chance to show his "goods" in front of the public. This invitation shows that Islam is not as others describe it or as they wish it to be. The fact is that Islam does have an answer to every question one may raise. So, I think it would be more democratic if Ms. Habib met well-educated Muslims to exchange views with them rather than mock their intentions.

Reaching power in Islam does not mean the imposing of just one way of life on all citizens. Ms. Habib made a mistake here because Islam does not use compulsion and force to change the views of people, but it uses logical reasoning and persuasion.

Imad Awadallah Hussein,
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Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

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'Americans recognise Islam as a civilising force'

(Continued from page 4)

East that is thousands of years old. Our interaction spans political, economic, social, cultural and military fields. We should not ignore this totality.

The third point is common aspirations. Despite obvious differences, we and the peoples of the Near East share important aspirations, which I will touch on later. These common aspirations provide a promising foundation for future cooperation.

Islam and the West

Politics in the region has increasingly focussed on the issues of change, openness, and economic and social inequities. As part of a trend that predates the events I have recounted, the role of religion has become more manifest and much attention is being paid to a phenomenon variously labeled Political Islam, the Islamic Revival or Islamic Fundamentalism.

Uncertainty regarding this renewed Islamic emphasis abounds. Some say that it is causing a widening gap between Western values and those of the Muslim World. It is important to assess this phenomenon carefully, so that we do not fall victim to misplaced fears or faulty perceptions.

A cover of a recent issue of "The Economist" magazine headlined its main story "Living With Islam" and portrayed a man in traditional dress, standing in front of a mosque, and holding a gun. Inside the magazine, we are told, that "Islam Resumes its March" and that "one anti-Western 'ism' is growing strong."

King outlines vision of Jordan

(Continued from page 1)

to rise, the enemies, aided by many among us, strike and abort our endeavours," the King said.

Addressing the graduation ceremony, Mutta University President Mohammad Adnan Al Bakhit thanked King Hussein for his patronage of the graduation ceremony and reviewed the university's plans and future aspirations.

He said the university's aspirations were huge and its vision for the future was clear.

He stressed the university's keen interest in pursuing the broad vision of Jordan, particularly in the areas of health, water, and mining and in preparing the citizen to assume a full role in the comprehensive development process of the country.

The university plans to set up a nursing faculty in cooperation with the Royal Medical Services and the Public Security and the various other government departments concerned, he said.

He noted that the presence of the three major industries in the south rekindled hopes for setting up a specialised hospital to help ease the burden on the medical institution and the University of Jordan hospital. He said the university plans to establish a faculty of agriculture to integrate the specialisations in other universities rather than replicating them.

The proposed faculty will have to address such issues as reclamation of dry land, rangeland, livestock breeding and agricultural extension.

The university also plans to introduce, for the first time in Jordan, specialisations in geology and minerals, Dr. Bakhit said.

He also said that the university cannot isolate itself from the neighbouring areas, nor can it relinquish its social and economic responsibilities towards residents of the area.

The university, in cooperation with a number of ministries and major industries, has drawn up a

practical concept for implementing a social and economic package in implementation of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan's directives, Dr. Bakhit said.

Dr. Bakhit said the university was ready to participate in drawing up a plan for setting up light industries in the region similar to other regions in the Kingdom. He added that the university had plans to establish a quality control laboratory to examine water and to establish a medical laboratory.

He referred to the special care and attention the university gives to its students, saying that the university encourages constructive dialogue and respect of opinion.

"We are here not to confiscate ideas, but to foster and feed them within the framework of loyalty to the homeland, the nation and the principles of the Great Arab Revolt," Dr. Bakhit said.

He underlined the importance of assessing the university's experience over the past 10 years and sought the King's permission to form committees grouping intellectuals and experts from inside and outside the university to assess the university's experience. "Drawing from the feedback received by such committees, we will reconsider the university's plans," he said.

The armed forces multi also addressed the celebration, saying that the new graduates would support their colleagues in the armed forces.

At the end of the ceremony, King Hussein presented awards to the excellent students.

The ceremony was attended by Their Royal Highnesses Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein, Prince Ali Ben Al Hussein, Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, the speakers of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament, Royal Court Chief Khaled Al Karaki, Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid and senior civil and military officials.

different ways.

Political participation

For our part as Americans, we are proud of the principles on which our country is founded. They have withstood many severe challenges over more than two centuries. We know they work. We therefore are committed to encouraging greater openness and responsiveness of political systems throughout the world.

I am not talking here about trying to impose an American model on others. Each country must work out, in accordance with its own traditions, history and particular circumstances, how and at what pace to broaden political participation. In this respect, it is essential that there be real political dialogue between government on the one hand; and the people and parties and other institutions on the other. Those who are prepared to take specific steps toward free elections, creating independent judiciaries, promoting the rule of law, reducing restrictions on the press, respecting the rights of minorities, and guaranteeing individual rights, will find us ready to recognise and support their efforts, just as those moving in the opposite direction will find us ready to speak candidly and act accordingly. As Secretary Baker has said: "We best can have truly close and enduring relations with those countries with which we share fundamental values."

Those who seek to broaden political participation in the Middle East will, therefore, find us supportive, as we have been elsewhere in the world. At the same time, we are suspect of those who would use the democratic process to come to power, only to destroy that very process in order to retain power and political dominance. While we believe in the principle of one person, one vote, "we do not support one person, one vote, one time."

Let me make it very clear with whom we differ: we differ with those, regardless of their religion, who practice terrorism, oppress minorities, preach intolerance or violate internationally accepted standards of conduct regarding human rights; with those who are insensitive to the need for political pluralism; with those who cloak their message in another brand of authoritarianism; with those who substitute religious and political confrontation for constructive engagement with the rest of the world; with those who do not share our commitment to peaceful resolution of conflict, especially the Arab/Israeli conflict; and with those who would pursue their goals through repression or violence.

It is for just these reasons that we have such basic differences with the avowedly secular governments in Iraq and Libya. To the extent that other governments pursue or adopt similar

practices, we will distance ourselves from them, regardless of whether they describe their approach in secular, religious or any other terms. Simply stated, religion is not a determinant — positive or negative — in the nature or quality of our relations with other countries. Our quarrel is with extremism, and the violence, denial, intolerance, intimidation, coercion and terror which too often accompany it.

The facts bear that out. The United States has good, productive relations with countries and peoples of all religions throughout the world, including many whose systems of government are firmly grounded in Islamic principles. Religious freedom and tolerance are integral elements of our American national character and constitutional system.

Indeed, as much as any society, the American people understand the meaning of diversity and the virtues of tolerance.

Conclusion

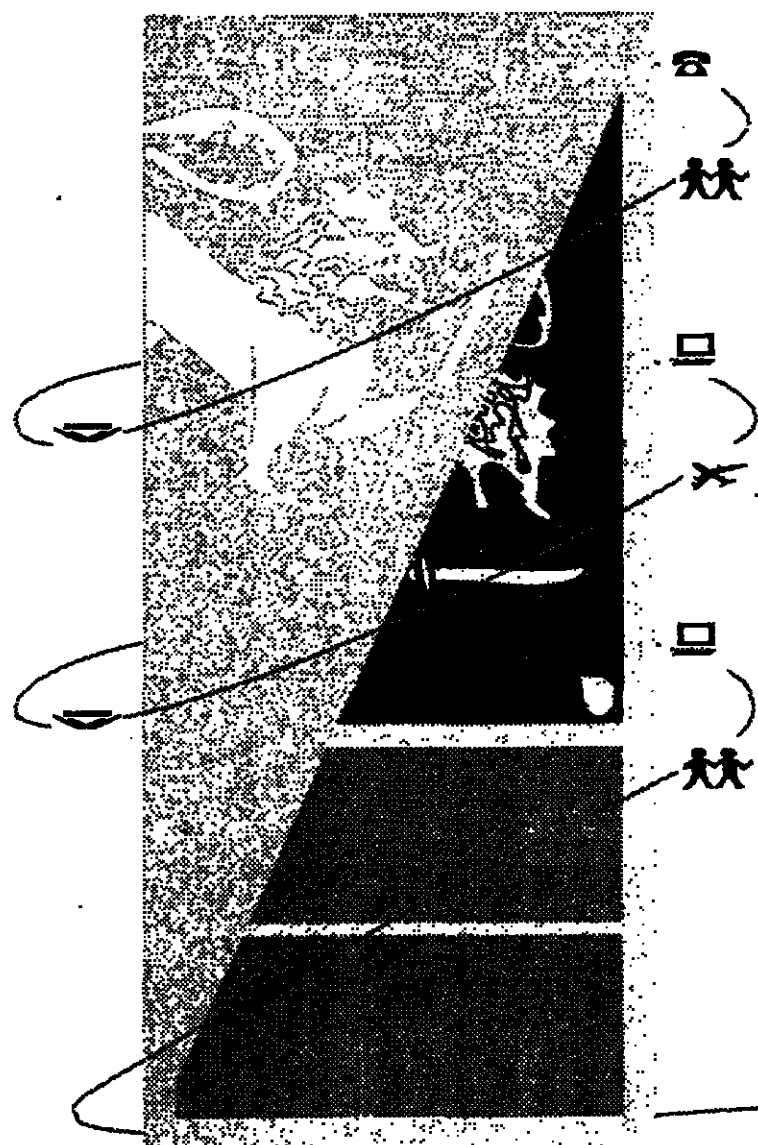
The broad policy goals of the United States in the Near East region have been laid down by President Bush and Secretary Baker: Genuine peace between Israel and its Arab neighbours; enhancing security and deterring or defeating aggression; helping to protect the world's economic security, promoting economic and social justice; and promoting the values in which we believe.

I believe these are aspirations in which the peoples of the region — whether Muslim, Jewish, Christian or otherwise can realistically share. Like us, they seek a peaceful, better future. They aspire to work productively in peace and safety to feed, house and clothe their families; in which their children can be educated and find avenues of success; in which they can have a say and can be consulted in how they will be governed; and in which they can find personal fulfillment and justice. In this respect, the pursuit of viable economic and social development programmes, privatisation, and adequate educational and vocational training opportunities, are key to responding to the basic material needs of the region's people.

Working with an international community of unprecedented solidarity, we have come a long way in the past few years in repelling aggression and in promoting a negotiated peace to a seemingly intractable conflict in the region. We still have a long way to go before these worthy efforts will have achieved success and before the other aspirations we share are realised. We can get there through close engagement and constructive interaction between the United States and all the countries of the Near East region at all levels — government-to-government, group-to-group, person-to-person and faith-to-faith.

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Seles beats Graf, wins 3rd straight French Open title

PARIS (R) — Monica Seles out-fought Steffi Graf, 6-2, 3-6, 10-8 in an epic final Saturday to become the first woman in 55 years to win three straight French Open titles.

After a slow start by Graf that cost her the first set, the number one and number two ranked players in the world waged a spectacular battle that had the centre-court crowd gasping and shouting.

The third set was the longest set in a women's final in Paris since 1956, when Althea Gibson beat Angela Mortimer, 6-0, 12-10.

"I've never played a set like that in my life," Seles said of the 91-minute third set. "It was just a great match. It was too bad for whoever lost."

Graf paid tribute to Seles' competitiveness.

"You've seen it in other matches," Graf said. "She's been down — she always comes back, even if it's close, even if she's tired."

Seles, entering her hold on the top ranking, has now won six Grand Slams, including the last five she has played in — she missed Wimbledon last year. Having won the Australian Open in January, she is half way to this Grand Slam.

On Sunday, top-seeded Jim Courier, a heavy favourite to retain this title, also will seek to move half way toward the Grand Slam in the men's final against number seven seed Petr Korda of Czechoslovakia.

The second-seeded Graf, serving while down 3-5 in the last set, saved four match points to extend the contest, bringing the fans to the feet in a standing ovation. The 22-year-old German said she couldn't recall ever getting warmer support from a crowd.

She swiftly broke Seles, then survived a break point to hold serve for a 6-5 lead. With no deucebreak used here in the last set of matches going their limit, the players headed into overtime, holding serve until Seles broke Graf to take an 8-7 lead.

Seles won the first point, but Graf answered with a sensational passing shot and broke back to 8-8. Again, Seles broke back, then served out of the victory. Graf, down 15-40, saved a fifth match point, but on the sixth she hit a forehand into the net.

The match lasted 2 hours, 43 minutes.

"I was especially tired mentally, because of all the match

points," said Seles, saying Graf was in better shape. "But I could have stayed out there, if I had to, a longer time."

Graf, who had a majority of the fans behind her, acknowledged the high caliber of play but said she was disappointed.

"It's great the way I came back and fought," she said. "But I should have played better when I was leading" in the third set.

"It was a great match, but it's really difficult, 10 minutes after it, to feel good about it."

Seles opened powerfully, winning 12 of the first 14 points to sweep the first three games of the match. Graf settled down, too late to vie for the set but sufficiently to put her on even terms in the fiercely contested second.

A key point came in the second game, when Graf saved a break point with a series of aggressive shots and held serve to level at 1-1. The two traded service breaks to reach 3-3, then Graf broke again to take a 4-3 lead after a Seles groundstroke floated just long.

The linesman called the ball good, but Graf drew a circle around the mark with her racket, gestured for the umpire to come over to inspect, and marched confidently to her chair.

In the third set, Seles benefited from two crucial balls that hit the net cord. One was hit by Graf, and would have given her a break point in the second game. But it popped in the air and fell back of Graf's side, helping Seles hold serve for 1-1.

In the next game, Seles obtained a decisive service break of her own, reaching break point on a shot that hit the cord and fell just over for a winner.

Seles is the first woman to capture three consecutive French Opens since Germany's Hilde Sterling accomplished the feat from 1935 to 1937.

Graf held a 5-2 edge in career matches against Seles going into Saturday's final, and had won their two most recent matches, both last year.

Seles won their last meeting in a Grand Slam final, here in 1990, 7-6 (8-6), 6-4.

Courier, whose 22-match winning streak has brought him the world number one ranking, heads into the final as one of the heaviest favourites in recent Grand Slam history.

Korda has never before survived the third round of a Grand Slam and progressed through his half of the draw here without facing another seeded player.

"I'm hitting the ball pretty well, hitting with a lot of confidence," Courier said after dismantling 11th-seeded Andre Agassi Friday. "When I'm doing that, I don't worry about the results."

Korda, unflappable in his 6-2, 7-6 (7-4) 6-3 victory Friday over crowd favourite Henri Leconte, was asked if Courier was unbeatable.

"We are human beings. Anybody can beat anybody," he said. "Jim is playing his best tennis at the moment, so we will see what's going to happen."

Al Hussein retains top spot in soccer first division standings

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — In the ninth and final week of the first round of Jordan Soccer Federation's first division championship Al Hussein-Irbid retained their overall lead with 11 points despite their loss to Al Ahli, while Al Wihdat scored a precious win over Al Ramtha and Sahab scored their first win over Yarmouk Amman.

Al Wihdat, who had so far only defeated bottom of the division Al Arabi, Friday played their best match and surely regained their confidence after they beat Al Ramtha 4-2 at Al Hassan Sports City in Irbid.

Al Wihdat's Jihad Abdul Mun'em scored the match's first goal in the 10th minute. Al Ramtha's Mouaffaq Abu Hudeib and Khaled Al Aqouri lost many chances to equalise before Al Wihdat's Hisham Abdul Mun'em scored a second goal in the 22nd minute.

Al Wihdat tightened their defence while an error by Al Ramtha's goalkeeper scored Al Wihdat's third goal by Jihad Abdul Mun'em.

Al Ramtha's Khaled Al Aqouri scored his team's first goal in the 42nd minute to end the first half at 3-1 for Al Wihdat.

Al Ramtha repeatedly tried to catch up, but Al Wihdat's defence aborted any such

attempt as Jihad Abdul Mun'em went on to score his third and Al Wihdat's fourth goal in the 53rd minute. Al Ramtha's Badran Al Shaqran scored his team's second goal in the 80th minute to end the match 4-2 for Al Wihdat.

Meanwhile at Al Hussein Youth City in Amman, newcomers to the division, Sahab scored their first win in the first division when they overcame the other newcomers, Yarmouk Amman, 2-0.

Sahab's Mohammad Al Ashab scored both his team's goals in the 14th and 28th minutes of the first half.

Both teams lost other chances to score in the second half, as the match ended 2-0 for Sahab who are now tied with Al Wihdat with 7 points in the overall standings.

In another match, Al Ahli scored a convincing win over Al Hussein who had not lost

any match yet.

Al Hussein had the advantage and lost many chances to score an early goal as Al Ahli's goalkeeper put up a great effort and succeeded in aborting Al Hussein's attempts.

Meanwhile Al Ahli's Mohammad Al Joker scored his team's first goal in the 40th minute, to end the first half 1-0 for Al Ahli.

Al Ahli kept up their attempts to score a second goal while preventing Al Hussein's Aref Hussein and Kamal Al Kharouf from scoring.

Al Ahli's Mohammad Al Joker again scored for his team from a header in the 83rd minute to end the match 2-0 for Al Ahli who now have 10 points in the overall standings.

Al Faisali will play Al Arabi June 15 to end the first round of the first division soccer championship. The second round will begin June 25.

STANDINGS

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts.
Al Hussein	8	4	3	1	11	8	11
Al Ramtha	8	4	2	2	14	11	10
Al Ahli	8	3	4	1	9	6	10
Al Faisali	7	2	4	1	10	7	8
Al Wihdat	8	2	4	2	8	6	8
Al Arabi	8	2	3	3	12	12	7
Sahab	8	1	5	2	11	13	5
Yarmouk Amman	8	2	1	5	5	12	5
Al Arabi	7	1	2	4	7	12	4

Blazers beat Bulls, even NBA series 1-1

CHICAGO (R) — Danny Ainge scored nine of his 17 points in overtime and the Portland Trail Blazers erased a 10-point fourth-quarter deficit to beat the defending champion Chicago Bulls 115-104 Friday in the second game of the National Basketball Association (NBA) finals.

The Blazers, who were embarrassed 122-89 Wednesday, evened the best-of-seven championship series at one game apiece with the next three to be played in Portland.

Ainge stepped in for Portland's main man Clyde Drexler, who fouled out with just under five minutes left in the fourth quarter, and wound up shooting seven for 10 in 23 minutes with four assists for the game.

His nine points in overtime tied a finals record shared by John Havlicek and Bill Laimbeer.

Drexler was the Blazers' top scorer with 26 points. Terry Porter scored 24 points, 11 of them in the fourth quarter.

Michael Jordan scored a game-high 39 points for the Bulls — the same total he scored in the series opener — but he did not have the touch from three-point range that had surprised even him last time.

Jordan missed a chance to win the game in regulation when his 18-footer fell off the back of the rim as time expired.

The Blazers had reeled off six points in a row to tie the game at 95 with 45.5 seconds to go in the fourth quarter.

Jordan then put the Bulls on top with a reverse layup with 31.3 seconds left, but centre Kevin Duckworth's short baseline jumper tied it at 97, where it stayed until overtime.

The Blazers scored 12 of the last 15 points in the game after Duckworth gave Portland a 103-100 lead with a spinning jumper and Horace Grant made one of two free throws for Chicago.

The Bulls had mounted their own comeback, outscoring Portland 32-16 in the third quarter after trailing 50-41 at halftime. Chicago scored the last 31 points of the quarter to grab a 77-70 advantage.

John Paxson had three of his four three-pointers in the third period to lead the charge.

The Blazers, making their second finals appearance in three years, led 31-23 at the end of the first quarter.

Buck Williams, who was held to three points in the first game, had 19 points and 14 rebounds for the Trail Blazers while Jerome Kersey added 12 before fouling out in overtime.

Scottie Pippen had 18 points and Paxson 16 for the Bulls.

The 18 points scored by Portland in overtime were the second most in a finals overtime period behind the Los Angeles Lakers' 22 against the New York Knicks in 1970.

Game three is in Portland Sunday night.



Michael Jordan

SPORTS NEWS IN BRIEF

Harding keeps WBC title

MARSEILLE, France (R) — Australian Jeff Harding survived a brave challenge by Christophe Tiozzo of France to retain his WBC light-heavyweight crown with an eighth round stoppage Friday. Harding was behind on points when he floored the Frenchman with a fierce left hook. Tiozzo managed to stand up but was unable to react when the holder rushed in and the fight was halted. Tiozzo, making his comeback in Marseille where he lost his WBA super-middleweight crown to Victor Cordoba of Panama in April last year, was on top from the start thanks to his superb left jab and clever combinations. But Harding lived up to his reputation of being a tough warrior by working on his opponent despite a cut over his right eye. Tiozzo was hurt by several left hooks but managed to shake the champion with fast left-right combinations. But his hopes of regaining a world title vanished when another formidable left hook by Harding sent him to the canvas with four rounds remaining.

Walder — 9th best long jumper

AUSTIN, Texas (R) — Erick Walder, hoping to make a big impact before the U.S. Olympic trials, sailed 8.47 metres (27 feet 9-1/2 inches) on his first jump to become the ninth best long jumper of all time at the NCAA championships Friday. It was a big pressure reliever, "said Walder, who was heavily favoured to win the event at these U.S. collegiate athletics championships at the University of Texas. Only two-time Olympic champion Carl Lewis and world record holder Mike Powell have jumped as far this year without an aiding wind. Nigerian Olapade Adeniken equalled the third fastest time in the 100 metres this year when he clocked 9.97 seconds in the semifinals. He also was one of the top qualifiers in the 200 metres with a clocking of 20.62 seconds into a head wind of 2.45 metres per second.

Seville soccer club hires Bilardo as coach

SEVILLE, Spain (AP) — Spanish first-division club Seville has named as coach Carlos Bilardo, the guiding force behind the Argentine national team's 1986 World Cup victory, a club spokesman said Friday. Bilardo, who retired after Argentina's runner-up finish in the 1990 World Cup, will replace first-year Uruguayan coach Victor Esparraco, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity. Seville has stumbled to 11th place in Spain's first division under Esparraco, 13-8-16, going into the last weekend of the season. The official disclosed no details of Bilardo's contract. A press conference was scheduled for later Friday.

Swiss medal hope withdraws from Olympics

GENEVA (R) — Christine Stueckelberger, one of the main Swiss medal hopes in the Olympics dressage event, has confirmed she will not be taking part in Barcelona because her horse is unwell. Stueckelberger, 45, the 1976 Olympic champion, said the 15-year-old mare Opal had respiratory difficulties in hot and dusty conditions. She said that the horse's 14th place in the opening round of an international event in Munich last weekend had convinced her to give up her Olympic aspirations, adding that her other horse, Diamond, was too inexperienced for top-flight competition.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMMAM HIRSH
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KNOW YOUR BASICS

North-South vulnerable. North deals.

NORTH
♠ K 8 5
♥ K 8 3
♦ Q 6
♣ A K Q 6 3

EAST
♠ J 10 9 3
♥ A 8 6 2
♦ 8 7 5
♣ 10 9 7 4

WEST
♠ 4
♥ Q J 10 7
♦ K 8 3 2
♣ 10 9 7 4

SOUTH
♠ A Q 7 6 2
♥ 9 4
♦ A 9 10 4
♣ J 5

The bidding:
North East South West
1 NT Pass 3 ♠ Pass
4 ♠ Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: Queen of ♠. There are many situations in the play of the cards that recur frequently. Yet it is surprising how often these card combinations are misplayed.

South's jump to three spades presented North with a choice of contracts — no trump or spades. With three spades and a ruffing value in diamonds, North's choice of the suit game was automatic. As the cards lie, however, there is no trump by North would have been a claimer.

West led the queen of hearts and declarer was not the least concerned

when dummy's king fell to the ace. South ruffed the third heart and cashed the king and ace of spades to learn about the bad break. Now declarer realized he would need either the diamond finesse or to find East with four clubs if the contract were to succeed.

Since there was no way to try both lines, declarer opted for the diamond finesse. West's king of diamonds completed the defensive trick to come — down one. The only consolation declarer had was that the alternate line also would have failed.

All declarer needed to do to land the game was to leave an entry on the table. After ruffing the third heart, declarer should cash the ace and queen of trumps. If both defenders follow, declarer can draw the last trump and score an overtrick.

If either defender shows out on the second trump, declarer can maintain control by abandoning trumps and starting on the clubs. Best defense is for East to ruff the third club and shift to a diamond. Declarer does not need the finesse. Ace of diamonds and a trump to the king draws the last trump and allows declarer to collect five trump tricks, four clubs and the ace of diamonds.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY JUNE 7, 1992

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Faith and principles sustain you through any up set and difficulties today as the Moon squares Mercury and the Sun. Avoid one who has an eye on your assets. Not a good time for brunch.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You can be just as personal as you like in going after the things you desire the most during the daytime but tonight is your time for practical activities.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You can get all sorts of ideas from private sources during the day to further inspire you to a greater success but tonight look to your own personal desires.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Get out in the social gatherings you like most during the daytime, then tonight you can rightly busy yourself planning coming weeks activities.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Think about what influential persons can do for you to get their support about a very progressive new and interesting project.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Be open to your prophetic insight today which is unusually accurate, then follow it; while tonight you can plan down to earth ways for any public interests.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You see ways to do what your

attachment likes from an entirely new approach and in the evening find ways to make your dreams a reality.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Whatever new acquaintances you wish to make should be right at your fingertips now so cultivate them; later you can do courtesies they will value.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You see some ways you can be of service to others that will put you in a very favourable light; tonight to the outside chores necessary to effectuate this purpose.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Now you find that you can plan romantic and entertainment interests so you have some wonderful times and tonight make them a part of your life.

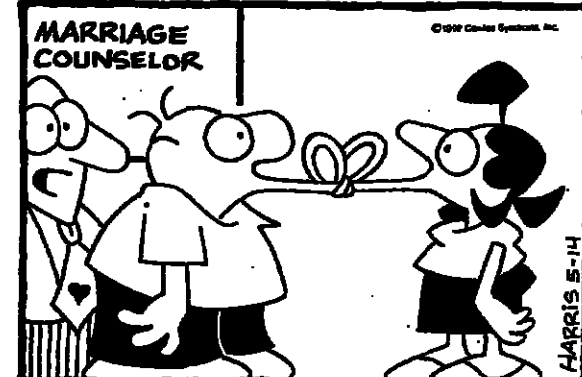
CAPRICORN: (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20) Enjoy home and family during the daytime while in the evening place your focus upon the details of a creative idea that appeals to you.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Trips during the daytime for sightseeing or visiting congenial companions is fine but tonight see that you get your home in apple order.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) A day to study all aspects of periodicals where ideas for making additional abundances are concerned, then you can draw up a blueprint of decisions reached.

THE BETTER HALF.

By Harris



JUMBLE.

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

ARDOH

MAGEL

FACTUE

DYGOTS



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

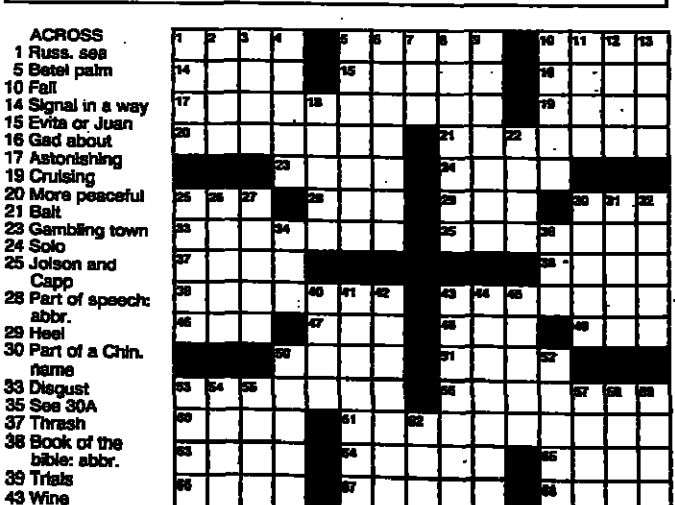
Print answer here: ○○○○○○

(Answers Monday)

Yesterday's Jumbles: COLON LOOSE DREDGE RATION

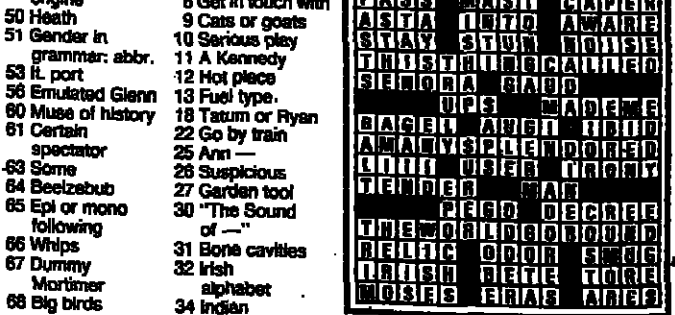
Answer: The good old days seem so appealing, because most of us were neither this at that time—"GOOD" NOR "OLD"

THE Daily Crossword by Dorothea E. Shipp



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Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:



44 Erie e.g.
45 Have
46 Reservations
50 Cat calls
52 Trace
53 Ella's forte
54 Code letter
55 Legal claim
56 Semester
58 Son of Rubashkin
59 WW II medal
62 Fr. season

Abu Dhabi approves \$1.6b power, water plan

ABU DHABI (R) — Abu Dhabi is to spend six billion dirhams (\$1.63 billion) on a new phase of a project to boost the emirate's water and electricity output, the Emirates News Agency said.

A spokesman for the Abu Dhabi Department of Electricity and Water said the funds were approved Tuesday to meet industrial and domestic demand, which grows by 10 per cent every year.

Industry sources said Wednesday that Swiss-Swedish engineering group ASEA Brown Boveri was the main contractor for the project.

A consortium of Belgian firms, including Brussels-based consultants Tractebel, will provide engineering and consultancy services for the four-year project, they added.

The second phase of the Al Tawilah project will raise the Gulf emirate's desalinated water production to 196 million gallons per day from the current level of 120 million gallons.

It will boost electricity output to almost 3,000 megawatts from 2,200 megawatts.

The second phase will add six turbines and six desalination units to the Al Tawilah complex, which was set up in 1985 about 50 kilometres outside of Abu Dhabi.

Slack economies, strong yen hit Japan's carmakers

TOKYO (R) — Sagging economies around the world and a strong yen played havoc with Japan's car industry in the year to March 31, with most manufacturers reporting sharp falls in profits.

Number-three carmaker Nissan Motor Co. Ltd has announced that parent current profit for 1991/92 plummeted 46.7 per cent from a year earlier to 87.75 billion yen (\$685 million).

Number-three Honda Motor Co. Ltd has also reported that 1991/92 current profit dropped 21.3 per cent to 66.94 billion yen (\$522 million).

Mazda Motor Corp. owned 23.9 per cent by U.S. Ford Motor Co., reported that current profit for 1991/92 tumbled 60 per cent to 19.67 billion yen (\$153 million).

"What with weak demand, a strong yen and higher operating costs, there were just no positive factors left," said Merrill Lynch Japan's car industry analyst, Ben Moyer.

Nissan Vice-President Atsushi Muramatsu told a news conference that although sales figures rose, Nissan made less profit per car because of higher production costs.

For 1992/93, Nissan expects parent current profit to plunge further to 40 billion yen (\$312 million).

"It's hard to judge. Although the domestic market will not do well in the first half (of 1992/93), we expect a recovery in the later half, along with the economy," Mr. Muramatsu said.

But even this forecast may be too optimistic, said one analyst for a Japanese securities firm.

"Nissan managed to scrap together its (1991/92) current profit mainly by selling stocks," he said. "But repeating that won't work this year. Even if it sold stocks again, achieving its forecast for 1992/93 will be very, very tough."

Honda also cited swelling operation costs and a strong yen as the main reasons for its decline in profit.

Analysts say Honda is more vulnerable to currency changes because it depends more on the North American market than its Japanese rivals. In 1991/92, it sold more vehicles in North America than it did at home.

"Honda will have to give up its position as Japan's number-three carmaker to Mitsubishi Motors for now," said Nikko Research Centre analyst Noriyuki Matsumura.

Mitsubishi Motors Corp. outperformed its rival in terms of parent company profit growth. Current profit grew 0.6 per cent to 50.54 billion yen (\$394 million) in 1991/92.

Mitsubishi's operating profits for 1991/92 dropped with the rest of the industry due to the high yen and rises in labour and capital investment costs, the company has reported.

But non-operating profits rose from the previous year because the company suffered fewer stock appraisal losses.

Mitsubishi, owned 5.88 per cent by U.S. carmaker Chrysler Corp., expects current profit to edge up again to 51 billion yen (\$398 million) in 1992/93.

"Demand for recreational vehicles is still on the rise, and our Galant model underwent a model change, so we expect our sales volume to grow," Mitsubishi's Managing Director Kazuo Sekino told a news conference.

Fuji Heavy Industries Ltd.'s 1991/92 balance sheet was still spotted with red ink, although not as heavily as a year earlier. The maker of Subaru cars posted parent current loss of 4.09 billion yen (\$31.9 million) in 1991/92, compared with a loss of 63.62 billion yen (\$497 million) in 1990/91.

This improvement was due to strong demand for the mainstay Legacy model and efforts to cut costs in production, marketing and research, Fuji Heavy's senior managing director, Nobuhiko Yoshida, told a news conference.

In Fuji Heavy had not suffered writedowns on marketable securities, it would have posted current profit of 770 million yen (\$6.01 million) in 1991/92 and made a comeback into the black, Mr. Yoshida said.

It aims to achieve that goal by

posting parent current profit of four billion yen (\$31.2 million) in 1992/93.

Japan's biggest carmaker, Toyota Motor Corp., has yet to announce its 1991/92 business results, but it too forecasts a dismal year.

For the year ending on June 30, the company forecasts parent current profit of 400 billion yen (\$3.12 billion), down from 574.32 billion yen (\$4.48 billion) in 1990/91.

Caught off guard in the last business year when an expected economic recovery failed to materialise, Japanese companies are treading carefully in their earnings forecasts for the current year.

But as the timing and pace of Japan's economic recovery is difficult to call, cautious corporate forecasts could well face revisions in coming months — in either direction.

"It's a very difficult time to be forecasting results," said Simon Smithson, head of research at Kleinwort Benson International.

"It hinges on the very different views people have of how long and how deep the recession will be," Mr. Smithson added. "It is generally recognised that the forecasts are very much a shot in the dark."

Some 1,400 listed firms excluding financials who late last month announced earnings for the year to March 31, 1992 saw current, or

pre-tax profits, slide 14.8 per cent in the period — well within the range most industry analysts predicted.

Current profits at 1,546 firms including financials fell an average 19.3 per cent in 1991/92, according to a survey by economic daily Nihon Keizai Shimbun.

Manufacturers alone suffered a 23.2 per cent drop in current profits, the newspaper said.

The companies expect profits to slip again in this business year, but less sharply — an average 5.1 per cent for nonfinancial listed firms and 5.3 per cent for manufacturers.

Those average figures, however, cover a wide range of forecasts including some potentially drastic declines.

Among the pessimists are giant steelmaker Nippon Steel Corp., which expects its parent current profits to drop to about 55 billion yen (\$423 million) in 1992/93 from 100.21 billion yen (\$770 million) last year.

Nissan Motor Co. Ltd. is equally gloomy, forecasting parent current profit of 40 billion yen (\$307 million) this year, less than half the 87.76 billion yen (\$675 million) it posted in 1991/92.

Behind the wary company forecasts is a belief that Japan's economic slowdown has yet to bottom out and that even if it does so in late summer or autumn, the pace of recovery will be moderate.

"We think business activities have not yet bottomed out," Masaya Miyoshi, president of influential business group Keidanren, has said.

"The economy is expected to start recovering gradually in the autumn but we think the recovery process will be gradual," he pointed out.

While ultimately the figures for 1991/92 profits held few surprises, it took two rounds of downward revisions for the companies to get their forecasts right.

Many firms now expect profits to continue to fall in the first half of the business year, with declines offset to some extent in the second half as the economy picks up.

Some analysts say, however, that companies may this time be eaning on the side of caution.

"Corporate Japan is shell-shocked by the imposition of the 'bubble economy' which deflated their balance sheets as well as their cash flows," said Jesper Koll, economist at S.G. Warburgs (Japan).

"Most companies are continuing straightforward extrapolations from the last six months... and are not looking for a pickup before the third quarter, which I think is on the conservative side," he said.

Financial Markets

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U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close	New York Close
	June 6, 1992	June 4, 1992
sterling pound	1.8325	1.8265
Deutsche Mark	1.5910	1.5980
Swiss Franc	1.4524	1.4622
French Franc	5.3595	5.3785
Japanese Yen	126.75	127.35
European Currency Unit	1.2875	1.2785

Source: Reuters

European Currency Unit for 100 units, 1992

Exchange Rates

June 6, 1992

Currency	1 UNIT	1000S	1000S	12 MONTHS
U.S. Dollar	3.81	3.87	4.06	4.30
sterling pound	10.56	10.00	10.00	9.93
Deutsche Mark	9.62	9.62	9.56	9.56
Swiss Franc	9.37	9.18	9.00	8.75
French Franc	10.00	10.00	9.93	9.87
Japanese Yen	4.68	4.59	4.53	4.53
European Currency Unit	10.06	10.06	10.31	10.00

Source: Reuters

Exchange Rates for 100 units, 1992

Commodity Prices

June 6, 1992

Commodity	Unit	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6700	0.6700
sterling pound	1.2391	1.2473
Deutsche Mark	0.4249	0.4270
Swiss Franc	0.4657	0.4680
French Franc	0.1262	0.1268
Japanese Yen	0.5334	0.5361
Dutch Guilder	0.3773	0.3792
Swedish Krona	0.1178	0.1184
Italian Lira	0.0562	0.0565
Belgian Franc	0.02065	0.02075

Source: Reuters

Commodity Prices for 100 units, 1992

Other Currencies

June 6, 1992

Currency	Unit	Offer
U.S. Dollar	1.7600	1.7720
sterling pound	0.0362	0.0365
Deutsche Mark	0.1803	0.1818
Swiss Franc	0.1834	0.1843
French Franc	0.2100	0.2250
Japanese Yen	1.7330	1.7425
UAE Dirham	0.1834	0.1843
Greek Drachma	0.03475	0.03600
Cypriot Pound	1.4850	1.1910

Source: Reuters

Other Currencies for 100 units, 1992

ABR Indices for Annual Financial Market

June 6, 1992

Index	5.6.1992 Close	27.5.1992 Close
All-Share	142.10	140.46
Banking Sector	104.55	104.48
Insurance Sector	150.45	150.72
Industry Sector	195.11	191.90
Services Sector	177.12	172.08

Source: Reuters

ABR Indices for 100 units, 1992

Iran raises return paid on bank deposits

NICOSIA (R) — Iran has raised the annual profit paid on various types of bank deposits by about one percentage point to a maximum of 14 per cent.

That rate is still less than half the interest charged at the Tehran Bazaar — between 30 and 50 per cent — and falls short of the official inflation rate of about 20 per cent.

Central bank governor Mohammad Hossein Adeli, quoted by Tehran Radio, said banks would pay 14 per cent on five-year deposits in the Iranian year ended on March 20, up from the provisional 13 per cent announced last year.

The decision was made by the Supreme Council of Money and Credit, which set rates for shorter-term deposits — ranging down to 6.5 per cent for three-month deposits, he said.

Since its 1979 Islamic revolution Iran has banned interest as a form of usury prohibited by Islam. Instead, under its 1983 no-interest banking law banks pay out shares of their profits to depositors and charge fees on loans.

The profit payout each year has been based on the aggregate performance of banks — all nationalised after the revolution — for that year, with a minimum percentage guaranteed in advance.

But Mr. Adeli said the council had decided that as of this year profit rates for each bank should be calculated separately to encourage competition.

Despite the increased payout, he said, there was no change in the fee banks would charge on loans — 0.0 per cent for the agriculture sector, 18 per cent for industry and between 12 and 16 per cent for housing.

Demand for money, especially in the high-return services sector where the government discourages loans, keeps interest rates high on the unofficial market.

Earlier this year the central bank blocked an effort by the Tehran Municipality to raise money by offering a 25 per cent return on deposits.

Bush says U.S. 'drowning in debt'

WASHINGTON (R) — President George Bush, promoting a constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget, said Saturday the United States was "drowning in debt."

In the latest of a flurry of speeches and events backing the amendment, Mr. Bush said it was time to stop treating the U.S. Treasury "like the corner cash machine."

"When you hear about a deficit measured in hundreds of billions of dollars, remember, that's not monopoly money," he said in a radio address to the nation.

"Some day, that debt must be paid with your money, as sure as your own personal debts will have to be paid with your money. It's unacceptable when this spending riptide has us drowning in debt, dragging us further out to sea."

Mr. Bush has spent much of the last week trying to build support for an amendment requiring the federal government to balance outlays and receipts. Amendment proposals are expected to come to a vote next week in the House of Representatives.

House Speaker Thomas Foley said Thursday the amendment was losing momentum.

But representative Charles Stenholm, a Texas Democrat, said he had enough votes to pass his amendment proposal, which would require a 60 per cent vote of all members of Congress to permit a deficit.

Currently, the federal deficit is estimated at about \$350 billion, while the national debt — the sum of all past deficits — is pushing \$4 trillion.

Russia may need \$36b in 1993 foreign aid

WASHINGTON (R) — Russia will need some \$36 billion in foreign assistance next year if it fails to move quickly to reform its agriculture and industry, the head of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has said.

The financing gap "will be double of this year," EBRD President Jacques Attali told reporters after meetings with senior U.S. officials here. The bank was set up a year ago by the United States and other industrial nations to help eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

But a senior Russian official, Konstantin Kagalovsky, cast doubt on Mr. Attali's estimate, saying he expects the 1993 financing gap to be below this year's \$18 billion as tough economic reforms reduce Moscow's dependence on foreign aid.

Mr. Kagalovsky also told Reuters he believes Russia can strike an agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) within weeks on an economic reform programme that will win the lending agency's financial support.

The United States and its rich allies have pledged to provide Russia with \$24 billion this year — \$18 billion to buy needed imports and \$6 billion for a fund to help stabilise its currency, the rouble.

But much of the help is contingent upon Russia winning IMF approval of its economic reforms and securing a \$4 billion loan from the international organisation.

International monetary sources said Monday that IMF officials returned from Moscow last month disappointed with the pace of Russia's reforms. Negotiations are expected to resume in Moscow next week.

Mr. Kagalovsky, who was here to sign the papers formally making Russia a member of the IMF, said that the obstacles to an agreement with the lending agency had been exaggerated.

"It is up to them (the IMF)," Mr. Kagalovsky said, when asked whether an agreement was possible.

The official, who represents Russia in its dealings with international financial institutions, said Moscow had a reform programme in place and pointed to its plans to unify the foreign exchange rate for the rouble at the beginning of July.

In order to contain inflation, Russia basically wants to peg the rouble's value to the dollar soon after that through use of them \$6 billion stabilisation fund.

But sources said the IMF would prefer to see the rouble float freely against other currencies for a longer time to ensure that it has attained a value on the foreign exchange market that can be defended against speculative sales.

Lloyds Bank drops bid for Midland

LONDON (R) — Lloyds Bank Friday threw in the towel in the fight to win control of Midland Bank, leaving victory within the grasp of HSBC Holdings in Britain's biggest bank takeover battle.

Lloyds said it had decided not to go ahead with its proposed \$3.7 billion (\$6.7 billion offer for its rival, blaming official red tape for its decision.

The bank's surprise decision left the way clear for Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corp's owner to continue with its agreed \$3.9 billion (\$7.1 billion) offer for Midland which would create one of the world's 10 biggest banks.

"We are obviously very pleased because we would like to go ahead with this merger, and this allows us to achieve that ambition," a spokeswoman for HSBC said.

The HSBC bid has already cleared all necessary regulatory hurdles but the tentative Lloyds offer was referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission (MMC), barring it from making a full bid until it had been cleared by the regulator.

"Given the disparity in the regulatory position and the delay and uncertainty introduced by the MMC inquiry, Lloyds Bank con-

siders that a substantial premium over HSBC's offer would be needed to persuade the shareholders of Midland to reject that offer," Lloyds said in a statement.

Midland welcomed the Lloyds withdrawal.

"We regard this as a very satisfactory outcome and good for our customers, staff and shareholders," a spokesman said.

Lloyds said it believed a merger with Midland would have created substantial benefits for both of them and would have reshaped British banking for the better.

"But at the price which would now be necessary following HSBC's increased offer, the board has concluded that it would not be in the interests of Lloyds Bank shareholders to proceed."

Earlier this week HSBC Holdings raised its initial offer for Midland from about \$3.3 billion (\$6 billion) in an effort to fend off Lloyds.

HSBC has already amassed a stake of about 16.26 per cent in Midland. Lloyds has no shares in its rival British bank although Friday morning it received the green light from British authorities to buy up to 10 per cent of Midland.

BNP to open in Tangiers

RABAT (R) — The Banque Nationale de Paris (BNP) is to open an offshore bank in the north Moroccan city of Tangier, bankers said Saturday. The BNP is the second foreign bank, after Credit Lyonnais of France, to decide to open in the Tangier offshore zone which the Moroccan government hopes will attract financial institutions when the European Community becomes a single market in 1993. In association with the Banque Marocaine du Commerce et de l'Industrie (BMCI) in which it is a shareholder, the BNP's offshore bank will have an initial capital of \$4 million. The Credit Lyonnais is associated in its offshore bank with the Credit du Maroc in which it is also a shareholder.

Italy's political wrangling threatening privatisation

CIVITAVECCHIA, Italy (R) — Political uncertainty is threatening Italy's hopes of raising desperately-needed cash through a sale-off of state companies, Treasury Director-General Mario Draghi has said.

"The programme is a major political decision and as such can only be executed by a government with a precise and stable mandate," he said.

Italy has been without a government since inconclusive general elections in April and its squabbling parliament seems unlikely to be able to form one for at least another month.

Economists say that even when a working majority does emerge from the 16 parties elected to parliament, it is unlikely to have the strength or stability to make the tough decisions needed to turn round Italy's finances.

The sale of state assets is designed to raise 15 trillion lire (\$12.5 billion) in 1992, a key element in financing the country's expected record budget deficit this year of 160 trillion lire (\$133 billion).

But political initiatives are needed to ensure that the plan goes smoothly, Mr. Draghi told Italian and British businessmen on board the British royal yacht Britannia at Civitavecchia.

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Serbs blast Sarajevo; two killed

BELGRADE (Agencies) — Serb tanks and artillery blasted Sarajevo on Saturday, killing two people and setting buildings ablaze, despite a U.N.-mediated deal to reopen its airport for emergency humanitarian aid.

The prolonged Serb siege of Sarajevo, focus of an ethnic war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, escalated as the agreement to end a Serb blockade of the airport had never happened.

In New York, U.N. officials said the pact, accepted by Bosnia's Muslim-led government and Serb delegates, provided for U.N. peace-keeping troops to take over the airport and for the removal of Serb anti-aircraft batteries.

There were no assurances that the pact would be respected by Serb military commanders bent on subjugating Sarajevo, crowning a campaign in which irregulars with Yugoslav army firepower have seized 65 per cent of Bosnia.

Many of the 500,000 residents in the Bosnian capital have been reduced to hardship diets of bread, stale cakes, sweets and the odd vegetable as relief agencies have been unable to pass Serb

front lines. Hospitals, jammed with wounded and sick people, are running out of medicines and have been repeatedly shelled by Serbs.

Sarajevo, caught for two months in a ring of fire from Serb units entrenched in surrounding mountains, endured one of its worst bouts of bombardment on Saturday morning, residents and journalists reported.

"The shelling was sustained and very fierce in almost all parts of the city. It was one of the two or three worst nights we've had. No one slept," Sarajevo radio editor Zoran Pirolic told Reuters by telephone.

He said Serb paramilitaries and Muslim-Croat territorial forces clinging to several key central districts fought battles with heavy machineguns and rocket-propelled grenades.

Two Sarajevo pensioners were killed when Serb mortar bombs smashed into their flats and at least 20 people were wounded in the artillery blitz, which tailed off after dark.

Serb mortar units and tanks also pounded the outlying district

of Dobrinja, where 40,000 mostly Slav Muslim and Croat residents, many of the children, have been confined to bomb shelters for weeks and are beginning to starve.

Bosnia's orthodox Serbs, comprising about 30 per cent of the 4.3 million population, revolted in March against a majority Muslim and Croat vote for independence from the Serb-dominated Yugoslav federation.

More than 5,700 people have been killed and one million driven from their homes, many at gunpoint.

Serbia and Montenegro, the only republics left in Yugoslavia after the secession of four others, have been isolated with a punitive U.N. trade embargo for orchestrating the savage ethnic conflict.

Yugoslavia's federal presidency has asked the council to rescind sanctions, citing "misconceptions" that Belgrade armed and incited the fighting in Bosnia.

Western countries have dismissed such protestations.

U.N. Security Council President Paul Nordera said Croatia, Serb and U.N. representa-

tives had agreed to evacuate armed forces from around the airport. He expressed trepidation about the accord's success, but added, "we are encouraged."

U.N. spokesman Francois Guiliani said the agreement called for anti-aircraft systems to be withdrawn from around the airport, and for artillery, mortars and missile-launchers to be guarded at depots by U.N. personnel.

U.N. officials in Sarajevo termed the army's earlier withdrawal from the Marshal Tito barracks, where they had been blockaded by Muslim snipers since before May 19, "a major breakthrough."

"We can now start talking business with the two sides," said Adnan Abdul Razak, a U.N. spokesman.

At the five-story U.N. headquarters, curious French soldiers, dressed only in their T-shirts and shorts, crouched behind the rattling windows watching red tracers and explosions.

They dropped to the floor as gunfire cracked from high-rise buildings across the street. The U.N. building took no serious hits.

Socialists delay Japan troop bill

TOKYO (AP) — A Socialist-led filibuster in parliament on Saturday delayed efforts by conservatives to pass a bill paving the way for the dispatch of Japanese troops overseas for the first time since World War II.

The governing Liberal Democratic Party had hoped to speed the divisive bill through the upper house, but has been bogged down by a Socialist-led "cow walk" — a snail-paced march to the podium to present votes.

Since the Socialists have succeeded in putting several other procedural measures up for vote first, it was unclear when the final vote on the troops bill might come.

A cow walk on the first measure lasted all night and into the afternoon Saturday.

"It is a question now of how long we can physically endure," said Makoto Tanabe, who heads the Socialists. "We will fight this to the end."

The filibuster was the first of its kind since the Socialists tried, but failed, to block the introduction of a sales tax three years ago.

Military issues have been a sensitive area for the Japanese throughout the postwar era. Public opinion tends towards pacifism, though a significant right-wing movement strongly advocates a beefed up military role.

The troops legislation was first proposed by the conservative Liberal Democrats during the Gulf war in response to U.S. criticism that Japan was willing to contribute money but not people to international peacekeeping efforts.

It would create a 2,000-man corps for U.N. peacekeeping operations, but makes Japanese participation in the more hazardous areas of peacekeeping — such as separating warring armies — contingent on passage of another bill.

Once the bill is passed, Japan's defence agency chief, Sohei Miyashita, has said he intends to send a group of soldiers to join the United Nations' peacekeeping operation in Cambodia.

The Socialists, Japan's largest opposition party, Communists and many academics oppose the bill because they say it violates a constitutional ban on using force to settle international disputes.

The bill has also met with anxious reactions from some of Japan's Asian neighbours, who fear a revival of Japanese militarism.

Even so, the bill is expected to pass because the Liberal Democrats hold a narrow majority coalition in the upper chamber with two moderate opposition parties and have a solid majority in the more powerful lower house.

The Liberal Democrats hope to begin deliberations on the bill in the lower house on Tuesday.

Several rallies were held in Tokyo as committee meetings on the bill turned chaotic in parliament Friday night, and police reported three bomb explosions, including one at the office of Education Minister Kunio Hatoyama. There were no injuries.

Leftist involvement was suspected.

Major in U.S. for talks with Bush

WASHINGTON (AP) — President George Bush and British Prime Minister John Major take up crises in Europe and the environmental conference in Brazil during weekend meetings at the Camp David presidential retreat.

Mr. Major arrived on Saturday.

The two leaders will exchange notes before a series of international summits — led off by the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro and followed next month by a European security conference in Helsinki and an economic summit in Munich.

Mr. Major is stopping in the United States before heading to Colombia and Brazil. Mr. Bush leaves later next week for the Rio summit, where U.S. positions on global warming and on protection of plants and animals have drawn sharp criticism.

An administration official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the British played a helpful role in working out differences between European nations and Washington on the global warming treaty.

The Bush administration objected to European attempts to set deadlines for the reduction of gas emissions thought to raise global temperatures. Mr. Bush is to go to Rio only after the treaty was modified to remove any binding commitments on emissions levels.

Also on the agenda at the Maryland retreat are the situation in Yugoslavia and the effectiveness of U.N.-imposed economic sanctions aimed at ending Serbian-led aggression in Bosnia.



John Major

Herzegovina and Croatia, the official said.

He said Mr. Bush expects to get the British view of the Danish vote Tuesday rejecting the Maastricht treaty for European integration, and on the future role of NATO.

Use of NATO troops in future peacekeeping missions in Europe and beyond will be one topic when Mr. Bush and Mr. Major join leaders from some 50 other nations in July for a meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said Mr. Bush and Mr. Major will also discuss the economic summit of seven industrialised nations in Munich — where aid to the former Soviet Union is a key issue — and efforts to break final obstacles to a treaty under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) treaty on freer international trade.

Czechoslovaks head for split — poll

PRAGUE, Czechoslovakia (AP) — Czechs and Slovaks on Saturday wrapped up a two-day election that will determine whether their country succumbs to nationalism and splits.

First exit polls suggested a strong showing by the expected frontrunners, the conservative Vaclav Klaus in the Czech lands, and populist Vladimir Meciar in Slovakia, the country's poorer, eastern third.

Mr. Klaus and Mr. Meciar are at odds over economic reform and the degree of autonomy Slovakia seeks from the shaky Czechoslovak federation.

They face tough negotiations to keep the country together.

Exit polls by the German

and their Christian Democrat allies 36 per cent of the vote in the Czech lands, much higher than predicted.

The party still will need coalition partners to form a Czech regional government. But the exit poll suggested sufficient support for other conservative parties which had previously agreed on a possible coalition with Mr. Klaus.

Left-wing parties showed weaker than expected in the Czech lands.

In Slovakia, Mr. Meciar's Movement for a Democratic Slovakia was projected to get 32 per cent of the vote for the region's parliament.

Mr. Meciar, ousted as Slovak premier a year ago, has won strong backing with calls

for Slovak sovereignty and slowing of economic reforms that Mr. Klaus, currently federal finance minister, has pushed nationwide.

The Slovak National Party, which goes much further Mr. Meciar and advocates outright independence for Slovakia, won 10 per cent of the regional vote, the exit poll said.

The Christian Democrats of current Slovak Premier Jan Carnogursky showed with only 8 per cent.

A Social Democratic Party fronted by Alexander Dubcek, leader of the 1968 Prague spring reforms, seemed unlikely to clear the 5 per cent barrier needed to win parliamentary seats.

But the renamed Commun-

ist Party, Party of the Democratic Left, showed with a strong 18 per cent of the regional vote in Slovakia.

That suggested Mr. Meciar will have to look either to extreme nationalists or former Communists to govern Slovakia. Either alternative would be difficult for Mr. Klaus to swallow.

The exit poll was based on interviews with 15,000 voters nationwide, and had a two per cent margin of error, Czechoslovak state TV said, reporting its results.

Czechoslovakia's complex political system makes it likely that regional governments will have to be formed before President Vaclav Havel can name a politician who tries to build a federal government.

Earth Summit:

Brazil signs key treaty; U.S. criticised for opposition

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil (AP) — Brazilian President Fernando Collor de Mello was the first to sign a biodiversity treaty aimed at preserving plant and animal species that are fast becoming extinct.

But U.S. President George Bush was harshly criticised Friday for confirming from Washington that he would not sign the treaty, the second to be finalised at the historic earth summit.

"I don't think history is going to look very kindly on a country that watered down two treaties and refused to sign one of them," Russell Mittermeier of Conservation International said Friday.

U.S. Sen. Timothy Wirth, D-Colo., was equally direct, saying: "It's a disgrace, isn't it, that we're not signing it."

A treaty on global warming was made available for signing Thursday, the second day of the U.N. conference on environment and development that continues through June 14.

Mr. Bush scheduled to arrive here Friday, diluted that treaty by having U.S. negotiators remove the requirement that countries reduce their emissions of carbon dioxide and other gases.

The biodiversity treaty aims to preserve plant and animal species that by some estimates are becoming extinct at a rate of 100 to 300 a day. Mr. Bush says the

wording makes unfair demands on industrial nations, who would fund it.

The chief of the U.S. delegation, William K. Reilly, sent Mr. Bush a memo days ago that offered some basis for compromise. That memo was leaked to a major U.S. newspaper by an unidentified White House official.

Forced to publicly take a stand, the White House flatly rejected Mr. Reilly's suggestions.

Other countries have different problems with the treaty. Austria, Switzerland and the Netherlands want tougher standards. Nevertheless, 15 delegation chiefs signed the treaty after Mr. Collor de Mello.

More than 120 heads of state are expected to add their signatures to the biodiversity treaty after they arrive next week. Nations have until June 19, 1993, to do so.

Delegates from all 178 U.N. members are attending the conference. They recessed Friday from debates on the Rio declaration final communiqué, but sessions will resume Monday.

Elsewhere at the summit, Norwegian environmentalists claimed that half a million Siberians have been contaminated since 1948 by radioactivity from the plant where the first Soviet atomic bomb was made.

Radioactive water from the

Mayak military-industrial base was discharged into the Techa and other rivers, said Knut Erik Nilsen, project manager of the Oslo-based Bellona Group. "If you multiply what happened in Chernobyl by 100, you have the extent of the tragedy in Mayak," he said.

The group's claim that the disaster was worse than the 1986 Chernobyl explosion is not supported by Russian and other Western scientists, though its data on radioactive contamination seems consistent with other findings.

Well-known ecologist Jacques-Yves Cousteau of France said unchecked population growth is a major factor in the deterioration of the environment.

Noting the world population is projected to triple to 16 billion by the year 2070, he said, "even if we found a way to feed this human tidal wave, it would be impossible to provide this multitude with decent living conditions."

UNICEF Executive Director James Grant linked deforestation, pollution and other environmental maladies with poverty in developing countries and overconsumption in rich ones.

"I will urge the leaders and nations of the world to address the longstanding poverty-underdevelopment side of the environmental crisis," he said.

Clinton: Don't count me out

HOUSTON (AP) — Bill Clinton has trailed both President George Bush and Ross Perot in some recent opinion polls, but the Democrat insists he's still in the thick of the race for the White House.

Speaking to the Democratic convention in Mr. Bush and Mr. Perot's home state Friday night, Clinton told cheering supporters it's far too early to count him out of the November election.

"They may say we can't win now. I've had my obituary written many times," he said.

The Arkansas governor derided Mr. Bush's handling of the economy and mocked Mr. Perot's boast that he would spend his own millions to get elected.

"I've got an opponent in this race who says he will... do what-

ever it takes to hold onto this job. I've got another one who said, 'I quote, he would spend whatever it takes to get this job,' Mr. Clinton said.

"Now let me tell you something... I can't spend whatever it takes. And there's a lot of things I wouldn't do to get this job," he said.

However, the apparent Democratic nominee told the 12,000-convention delegates he would seek to rebuild the American economy, create jobs and improve education for all children.

"I'll tell you what I will do. I will get up early and I will stay up late," he said. "I will work as long as it takes to bring common sense and a warm heart, a clear head and a driving, passionate vision back to this country be-

cause we have got to rescue the American dream."

Perot would cut taxes

Meanwhile Mr. Perot has said in an interview that the United States must revive its economy by promoting small business and manufacturing, rather than allowing jobs to drift overseas.

In a Los Angeles Times interview published Friday, the undeclared presidential candidate called for a lower capital gains tax rate and more bank credit to encourage small businesses.

In addition, the United States must stop transferring manufacturing jobs to nations with cheaper labour forces.

"We cannot be a superpower if we cannot manufacture here," Mr. Perot was quoted as saying.

Pope: Communism ruined African family

SAO TOME (R) — Pope John Paul on Saturday attacked Communism as a foreign-imposed ideology that had destroyed the African family, introducing contraception and abortion and loosening traditional links.

Church officials said the papal criticism was particularly aimed at the Cuban and East European doctors who ran the health system when Angola and the West African island republic of Sao Tome and Principe were faithful Soviet allies.

Expanding on a theme he took up on Friday in Angola, the Pope said people had lost track of the real sense of marriage while they had been deprived of personal freedom. He appealed for governments to reject divorce, polygamy and birth control.

"It's a message for the whole of Africa, not just Sao Tome. The holy father is convinced that Communism destroyed the traditional African family — not just the Christian family in Africa, but even the animist one — by wrecking such concepts as the obligation to look after the elderly," a senior Vatican official said of the speech.



Pope John Paul

Many Africans still adhere to animist religions that pre-date the arrival of Christianity and Islam to the continent and which attribute a living soul to plants, inanimate objects and natural phenomena.

"I appeal to the authorities of Sao Tome to protect and promote matrimony in the way God conceived it — monogamous, indis-soluble, fertile and respectful of family life," the Pope said in a

speech prepared for delivery on Saturday.

On Friday, he appealed to Angolans to "reject the deceitful propaganda about abortion." Roman Catholic missionaries in Central Angola say abortion — introduced by the Cuban doctors — is widespread in those war-ravaged areas.

Cuban forces who helped Luanda win independence in 1975 against the rival UNITA guerrilla movement completed withdrawal from Angola last year. The once-Marxist government and UNITA signed an accord in May 1991 ending 16 years of civil war.

"In the old days, having a family was a source of wealth for Africans. Since the war, every child has become a burden," said a Spanish nun in the central Angolan city of Huambo during the Pope's visit on Friday.

The Pope, although not mentioning the word Communism, said, "Angolan family values were put to the test by ideas and customs imported from abroad" that had perverted the life-giving emotion of love between man and woman.

Next Italian government takes shape

ROME (R) — An outline of Italy's next government was forming on Saturday but agreement on filling the country's two-month power vacuum is unlikely for at least another week, analysts believe.

Italy's 51st administration since World War II is expected to be slimmer than its predecessors, with a broader base of support. It may still be headed by socialist leader Bettino Craxi despite his alleged involvement in a bribery scandal.

"I have a feeling that in the end (Craxi) will get the premiership," said acting Budget Minister Paolo Cirino Pomicino, echoing a growing view.

Political leaders were holding urgent talks over the weekend on whether to continue backing the

beleaguered Mr. Craxi, a former prime minister with a reputation for decisive action.

Mr. Craxi has strongly denied allegations of involvement in the scandal which has unmasked a widespread system of local politicians demanding kickbacks for public works contracts.

Italy has been without a proper government since an April 5 general election crippled the ruling four-party coalition but failed to elect any obvious alternative.

No fewer than 16 parties were returned to parliament, creating a highly unstable political brew just when the country's mounting economic problems required decisive action.

Another reminder of the need for drastic measures to curb a

huge budget deficit came on Friday night when the U.S.-based Moody's Investors Service threatened to downgrade Italy's foreign currency debt rating.

Newly-elected Italian President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, who has to choose the next prime minister, suspended formal talks with party leaders over the weekend to avoid influencing local elections this Sunday and Monday.

Leaders of the smaller parties who have already been consulted by Mr. Scalfaro on the likely make-up of the next government have said he wants more technocrats brought in from outside to shore up public confidence.

He also wants a slimmer government, shorn of some of the more obscure ministries, they

added.

But the process of choosing the prime minister is being hampered both by the bribery scandal and by problems within Italy's largest party, the Christian Democrats.

Battered by their worst-ever result in the April election and without a party secretary since the resignation of Arnaldo Forlani last month, the Christian Democrats have been trying desperately to unite their squabbling factions.

Political analysts expect them to elect a new secretary next Thursday or Friday, a factor which may prompt Scalfaro to delay the naming of a prime minister until the following week to allow them time to have a united say in the decision.

Poland's young premier takes up the challenge

WARSAW (R) — Poland's bickering Solidarity politicians have turned to a youthful farm leader, 32-year-old Waldemar Pawlak, to try to break a dangerous power deadlock and solve the country's complex political puzzle.

Mr. Pawlak, voted in as prime minister on Friday in the wake of a row over the exposure of alleged ex-Communist collaborators, immediately took up the challenge.

"It's time to end the struggle of everybody with everybody and solve Polish problems as effectively as possible," he said. "The government is fully in control of the situation and there is no reason for alarm."

Mr. Pawlak pledged to end the turmoil which finally toppled his shaky predecessor, Jan Olszewski, and to take up the day-to-day business of running the country.

Mr. Olszewski's government fell after the distribution of deputies of lists of politicians alleged to have been former sec-

ret police agents unleashed a flood of accusations including reports that the army might be called on to intervene.

Within hours, Mr. Pawlak appointed interim defence and interior ministers to clear the air and promised to form his cabinet as soon as possible.

"The main task now is to pass the budget, then to agree on an economic programme," he said. Parliament immediately obliged, passing the IMF-backed budget by an overwhelming majority.

This gave Mr. Pawlak a valuable breathing space in which to try to put together a viable coalition from among the 29 small and bitterly-divided parties in the lower house (Sejm).

Asked how he could create a coalition from political factions as different as fire and water, he said: "You have to remember that when fire and water are combined steam is created. Let's make sure that the steam is not used for whistling, but to speed

the engine of state."

Mr. Pawlak, Poland's youngest-ever head of government, is the first to have no ties to the Solidarity movement since it removed the Communists from power in 1989.

A stern-faced farmer from central Poland, his greatest political asset appeared to be his lack of involvement in the internal feuds which have since riven Solidarity.

He leads the PSL Farm Party which has its roots in the Communist camp. But it has made strenuous efforts to sever these links and Mr. Pawlak himself has escaped being compromised.

"We don't want to hide our doubts (about PSL)," Bronislaw Geremek, a leader of the post-Solidarity Democratic Union, told parliament before it voted Mr. Pawlak into office.

"But we see here a young man representing a generation in whose hands lies the future of the country."

COLUMN

Young Elvis wins

NEW YORK (R) — Young Elvis Presley easily won a U.S. postal service ballot to decide which picture of the legendary singer would appear on a postage stamp. Former Postmaster General Anthony Frank announced that a young, slick-haired likeness of Elvis had won 851,000 votes in the nationwide mail-in vote, compared to 277,000 votes for a later portrait of Presley in a glitzy white jumpsuit. Frank announced the results at a ceremony broadcast on live television from "Graceland", the late singer's home in Memphis, Tennessee, joined by his widow Priscilla.

Buried alive

YAOUNDE (R) — Townspeople in southern Cameroon have been burying dogs alive as part of an anti-witchcraft drive. Alarmed by a series of mysterious deaths, four "anti-sorcerers" in Ebolowa this week started staging special rites in which local inhabitants flick a black dog with a stick while swearing they do not practise sorcery, local residents said. Once the dog has been buried alive, its spirit is said to haunt anyone who has told a lie. Residents said the anti-sorcerers have also called on villagers to hand in their magic charms, leaving an unattended house open at night for anonymous deposits. The operation yielded a collection of poison, fetishes, a belt said to turn into a snake at night and a bag of bewitched mosquitoes — said to render their victims sexually impotent. Belief in witchcraft is still rife in Cameroon. Witches can only be neutralised by using stronger sorcery and the person involved is said to die shortly after the witch inside him has been exorcised.

Iranian kills woman, dumps head in river

COLOGNE, Germany (R) — An Iranian living in Cologne apparently murdered his girlfriend, then cut up her body and scattered the parts in the river Rhine, police have said. They said the crime came to light after Massoud Madjidi, 29, threw himself to his death from his balcony after telling the superintendent of his apartment block that he had killed the woman. Police searched the flat and found a woman's leg in a black plastic bag hidden under piles of junk and rubbish, they said. It was later found to match other body parts and a head found in the Rhine over the last few days. The body was identified from fingerprints as being that of 24-year-old Afak Bahmani, who shared the flat, police said.

Penny pinching g makes news

LONDON (R) — An Australian who calls herself a compulsive penny pincher has started Britain's first magazine for devoted skinflints. The penny pincher's guide asks readers to write in with the meanest money-saving tips they can think of. "We've already been deluged," Sarah MacPherson, a 25-year-old publishing assistant who has launched the guide, said. She said she hoped the eight-page publication, which follows a hugely successful similar venture in the United States, would reach a wide audience in Britain's recession and make her money as well. The first edition was distributed free with an upper-crust women's magazine but the guide will in future be available by subscription for \$18 a year. MacPherson tells readers in the maiden issue how she and her husband Andy swapped gifts of a spaghetti strainer and a second hand jigsaw around a Christmas tree they got free from a friend. It offers 12 tips to readers on "quick, easy ways to save 100 pounds or more". One says smokers who cannot give up should stop buying cigarettes and smoke other people's instead.

Japanese teacher kisses job goodbye

TOKYO (R) — A Japanese primary school teacher has lost his job for kissing one of his pupils goodnight, a local education authority official said. The 36-year-old man was one of several teachers from the school in Kyoto, western Japan, who accompanied children on a trip to Hiroshima last month, the official said. The Tokyo Education Council which investigated the incident established that the teacher kissed the sleeping girl, whose age was not given, while checking on the children in their hotel rooms. Primary school pupils are aged between six and 12. The official said it did not appear that the teacher had sought to molest the child.